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The Saturday Review of Literature

EDITED BY HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

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The Admiral's War

WHEN an ex-admiral of the United States tells us that we may anticipate a war with Great Britain in order to safeguard our high tariff, our merchant marine, and our standard of living, the most besotted book worm is driven to think beyond his books. Those same books have told him, perhaps truly, that a high tariff and a merchant marine seeking the world's carrying trade are mutually incompatible, but, like the admiral, they seem to regard our standard of living as so much wealth which can be carried off in transports or protected by guns.

If by a standard of living one means bath tubs, automobiles, radio sets, demi-education for everybody, clean collars, and a telephone, the admiral is clearly right in thinking that they have to be fought for, though one detects in his remarks more than a trace of that Angloparanoia which used to be so characteristic of Fourth of July orators. But if by a standard of living is meant the way in which our minds live, then it is a question whether, so far as the arts are concerned, the American standard of living is worth defending.

It may be an excellent standard for bank clerks, shop keepers, manufacturers, and even lawyers. But for doctors probably, and ministers and teachers certainly, and still more certainly for the artist in everything from words to paint, it is a very trying standard indeed, and has been since the settlement of the country. These professionals need to be bothered as little as possible with the mechanics of living and the name one calls them by indicates that their business is not making wealth but transmuting it into something more valuable. The writer, the preacher, the teacher, the musician is like an engine which runs best in a bath of lubricant. Cost and the complexity of living get in his way, divert his energy. Even if the increased expense of everything carries upward the price of his own products, he invariably is cheated. Either he gets for his music, his painting, or his teaching an increase too little to meet the rising standards of the community, or, like the manufacturers, he cheapens his product in order to sell with profit to a larger market. This latter might almost be called the American plan, and it cannot, in the professional sense, be regarded as success.

Yet can you blame him? He is quite as human as the insurance agent and the meat packer to right and left of him. It is hard to live in America and not live like the Americans, especially as some American inventions for making life expensive are singularly pleasant. But that is not the worst of it. The really unpleasant feature of the American standard is that it makes any other standard almost impossible. Like the English sparrows, it drives out all competition. There is no easy-going life of old clothes, little inns, walking trips, little houses with much living in them, here, because the country is too expensive for that sort of thing. It is more profitable to run a restaurant than to provide a café chair on the sidewalk, more profitable to conduct an amusement park than a wayside tavern in the mountains. Thus pleasant living on an economical basis finds no encouragement in our United States and is usually squalid by comparison with Europe. Plain living becomes really plain and often ugly, and high thinking is not so agreeably done in a New York tenement as in the English lakes.

Yet so long as the advertisers tell all America that they must own or do everything that anybody else does or owns in order to be civilized, and so long as Americans believe them and continue to strain upwards to the limit of their endurance in order to have built-in bath tubs instead of the cruder variety, and slate roofs instead of shingles, and very loud speakers, and a larger car, and a shinier kind of floor, and the new furnace that pays for itself, and so on and so on, for which see any guide to civilization at the back of the magazines, these professional folk will suffer. The sellers who cater to comfort and vanity may break through and have many of the commodities of life that are worth even more than hot water and foundation planting—they may have leisure and travel and recreation, and, if they want it, time to think. But the followers of the arts and the sciences will be poorer (though cleaner) than the Europeans; less amused, less leisured, less productive, and probably less happy. The standard of living for them is low in America, as every honest American traveler knows.

We cannot all move to Paris, nor, to judge from the results, does that seem to be the best way out, at least in literature. But it may be possible to save enough porcelain tubs, telephones, automobiles, and

(*Continued on page* 597)

Miocene

By GEORGE STERLING

HERE, where this wall of sandstone leaves the ground,
Soaring in massive ramparts to the sky,
Beat once a surf that never human eye
Beheld, or human ear conceived in sound.
Dimly we trace, or think we trace, the bound
Of that forgotten ocean—slopes long dry,
Where once the wounded monster came to die,
Where now the fossils of the shark are found.

The flowers foam where foamed that ancient sea,
Their nectar given to the prowling bee.
The noon is on the pastures like a flame,
And where, long since, that mournful thunder broke,
Whose universal voice is still the same,
The cattle drowse beneath the shading oak.

This Week

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Sir Sidney Lee's "Life of Edward VII." Reviewed by *Robert Livingston Schuyler.*

Published by Time Incorporated,
Publishers of TIME,
The Weekly News-Magazine

Whaling Days*

By F. V. MORLEY

IN an old text of Olaus Magnus is a crude and laughable wood-cut. It is a sea-scape. A tempest is disappearing in the background; cloud-wracks cross the sky. The seas are short and high, breaking pyramid-wise. There is a faint twilight, a dim, cold, desolate hue somehow let in from the edge of the horizon—an aimless light, fitful and sad, whose only mission is to herald sorrow. A ship is in the foreground, laboring. She has weathered the tempest; new topsails have been bent on her stripped spars; and the clumsy, bluff-bowed galleon would readily renew her fight against the sea, but that the waves have gaped behind her, and from a whirlpool, wide, black, and cavernous, a monstrous head has risen, with sea-mane falling upon half-seen shoulders, mis-shapen and immense.

The head of this Leviathan is indescribable. A thousand mingled evil elements are magnified to form this crooked serpent. His eye, cold and drear, looks not upon the ship, but upon you, the terrified beholder; yet his jaws have already fastened on the galleon, his enormous spout has risen to deluge the main-tops before it dashes down upon the deck, and in another instant his inexorable bulk will drag the ship below.

There are two things unusually sinister about this picture. The first is a strange omission. No figures populate the desolate galleon. No comrade shares with you its fate; you are alone on the deserted deck, already tilting into Leviathan's maw. And for this one remnant of time everything is still; the end is about to happen, but it will not come. The sea's curled crests hang lifeless, the sails lie back upon the yards, the wind is hushed, the twilight holds, an intermitted gloom. Everything hangs for an instant this side the void, and the instant is an agonized eternity of companionless suspense. But the brutality of the second fact is worse. It is the unrighteous appearance of the monster, when, and only when, the long strain and struggle of the storm is over. It is the final, gratuitous, infliction of evil which outrages any independence of honor and justice. It is the last chapter of Ecclesiastes. The clouds have returned after the rain.

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I know not who the original engraver was, or whence he came. But his work means something—this at least, that there was a man who had seen what is not pleasant for men to see, and had registered his momentary triumph over it. And if one says, as men have said, that this picture is an example of mediæval ignorance about the sperm whale, it should be my part gracefully to disagree. It were better to admit at once that there are two kinds of whales—the whales that are classified as cetaceans, and those that are enlarged into ideas. The former are biological specimens or commercial propositions; the latter belong to a race longer-lived, changed in color as the white whale, Moby Dick, or changed in form as the dragon, the undying serpent, the something in the sea of which we feel afraid. There has always been, and no doubt ever will be, confusion as to this division; as there has always been a mutual misunderstanding between the hunter who kills whales, the scientist who studies them, the ad-

*MOBY DICK. By HERMAN MELVILLE. American Library Edition. New York: A. & C. Boni. 1924. $2.00.
WHALING. By CHARLES BOARDMAN HAWES. New York: Doubleday, Page & Co. 1924. $5.00.

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venturer who lusts for them, and the writer who creates them.

It would be entering the looking-glass land of paradox to suggest that the confusion started ere even the whale's spout was seen by man. But if the trouble did not begin so early, it started, perhaps, with the simple and sudden experience of a naïve man, who, from a coracle, saw a whale at sea—saw him a thousand feet long, escaped him by a miracle, and as soon as he got ashore created a new myth in the minds of his hearers, in the effort to express and to explain and to satisfy his emotion at the very thought of the imagined terrors he had experienced. Some who heard him flatly contradicted him; some did not go swimming for weeks after the narrative; and those who neither believed nor disbelieved, those fanciful folk who were amused at the intellectual possibilities of the tale, began inventing Sinbad stories, to the eternal benefit of children. Such stories prospered, as when King Juba of Numidia told Gaius Caesar that a whale six hundred feet long and three hundred and sixty feet broad had just entered a river in Arabia; as when Olaus Magnus increased these figures by half as much again in talking of his "hirsute" whales. To such stories the magi added details until the whale was fitted out with as much superstructure as an ocean liner, and even had accommodation (one-class) for passengers within.

Fancy became inventive on its own account; but occasionally the touch of real imagination enlivens classical descriptions. Job and Jonah, for example, made poetry of older fancies; and Jorath the Chaldean (who was a charming and a friendly figure) made a whale of character—a friendly whale. When hungry, said Jorath, the whale opens his mouth and emits a fragrant odor like amber, and other fish, attracted and delighted thereby, swim into its mouth and down its throat, and digest and are digested in the cavernous stomach, with never a pang. On some occasions the whale uses this pleasant breath to save and protect little fish instead of embalming them within himself. When a very wicked and venomous kind of a sea-serpent glides through the dusky waves by night, all tiny fishes take refuge behind the whale, who then repels the foetid odor of the newcomer by the sweetness of his own effusion. In the whale, continues Jorath, terrestrial matter dominates over water, and consequently he becomes very corpulent and fat, and in his old age collects dust on his back to such an extent that vegetation grows there and the creature is often mistaken for an island. The whale cherishes his young with wondrous love, and when they are stranded on shoals he frees them by spouting water over them. When a severe storm is raging, he swallows them, and they abide safely within until the storm is past, when he opens his mouth, and they come out again. A pleasant whale was Jorath's whale; and the greatest day of his existence occurred off Rimini, where he had the deepest place in the congregation of fishes, great and small and middling, who assembled there for love of good St. Anthony, and held their heads out of water and listened to the sermon in great peace and gentleness and perfect order.

If you do not care for Juba and Jorath and their followers, the mediæval naturalists, I must plead that they mostly spoke with their eyes open to the joy of living, and a wink sometimes for the older folk who listened, and a belief always that all things were possible in nature, and an excuse to their pillows (if they were taken to task) that there was no harm in writing even though they had not actually fingered the whale. But occasionally, as a moonlit night will change at the passage of a cloud, a chill comes over these placid reflections, and a grim remark will indicate a struggle with fear.

> For all that here on earth we dreadfull hold,
> Be but as bugs to fearen babes withal,
> Compared to the creatures in the seas entrall.

No longer is the tone that of the Psalm, but the tone of Isaiah. We see Leviathan the piercing serpent, even Leviathan that crooked serpent; he hath enlarged himself, and opened his mouth without measure. No more than in the case of Jorath are we dealing with the whale of science; save to recognize a fitting symbol for a terrible idea, and to gain that willing suspension of disbelief which is necessary for all teaching. And what was more likely to be believed amid the waste of waters than Plutarch's whale?—for whom "what thing soever cometh within the chaos of his mouth, be it beast, boat, or stone, down it goes all incontinently that foul great swallow of his, and perisheth in the bottomless gulf of his paunch." The incarnation of this whale as the Prince of all powers of darkness on the sea is a thesis tangible enough for a Ph.D. degree. Ships go down at sea, tall ships go down, and men come back no more, and something swallows them. So is all hatred and revenge ashore focussed upon the whale, as demon of this fate; and he takes on the blackest character in representations of malignity. Hell's fire is shown through a whale's mouth, in old morality plays; and in the stained glass window of a country church in England, where a golden heaven shines upon the one side of St. Michael, the other side of the picture shows—underneath a scroll belonging to the souls condemned, whose words are "Woe to the day when I was born"—as the lowest figure of all tormentors, far down in blackness under lurid scarlet flames, the principal demon, Beelzebub, in the semblance of a whale.

The landsman may rejoice in friendly whales, or may struggle with frightful whales; but for the seaman who has to face the sea, there must be surety that the whale he is going to meet is not like those whales—neither large and deceptive as an island, nor overwhelming and malevolent as the evil one. Wherefore, whenever a whale was cast ashore, seamen looked him over, not without anxiety. One thing they learnt that mightily delighted them. In almost every case the whale's throat was closed, and he could swallow nothing bigger than a herring. After this, so far as brave men were concerned, the whale at sea was merely an awkward bulk, that might be killed for fun or profit; and they began to kill him, when chance offered, with joy and boasting. Beowulf and Octher go on record as exaggerating the facts of their achievements; partly because landsmen desired them to be meticulous, partly because these uncouth red-bearded giants wished to encourage themselves. They broke the ice; and not long after we hear of further exciting forays. By the Bay of Biscay, the longshoremen built a tower on a hill from which they might see "the Balaines which pass, and perceiving them coming partly by the loud noise they make, and partly by the water which they throw out by a conduit which they possess in the middle of the forehead." Boats set out immediately, armed with hand lances and harpoons; and half the boats were reserved for men whose sole duty was to pick out of the sea such harpooneers as overbalanced and fell in through excitement.

* * *

So the myth of the terrible whale began to be discarded. A fight with a whale became merely a dangerous and inviting contest. Seamen did not lose respect for his bulk, for the power of his smashing flukes, but along the coasts his supernatural qualities seemed lessened. In lonely far-off seas there remained something mysterious, something desperate, in his appearances; but even this expectation gradually dwindled. In the year 1556 Master Steven Burrough, "Master of the Pinnesse called the Serchthrift," made a "Navigation and Discoverie toward the river of Ob," cruising doubtfully by Nova Zembla, hoping to make Cathay. Here is what happened on "S. James, his day," as the Serchthrift was "bolting to the windwardes." In the evening:

> There was a monstrous Whale aboard of us, so neere to our side that we might have thrust a sworde or any other weapon in him, which we durst not doe for feare he should have overthrowen our shippe: and then I called my company together, and all of us shouted, and with the crie that we made he departed from us: There was as much above water of his backe as the bredth of our pinnesse, and at his falling downe, he made such a terrible noyse in the water, that a man would greatly have marvelled, except hee had knowen the cause of it: but God be thanked, we were quietly delivered of him. . . .

That scene I take as marking the downfall of the whale. He who stood for Leviathan in earlier days, who could not be drawn out with a hook, had been cruelly massacred along habitable coasts; the frightful monster of dim, perilous seas, had been withstood and scared off with a cry. Surely there was no longer much to fear from him. All we needed was some use to put him to. And when the need for lamps made us to imitate the Eskimo in burning whale-oil, all was prepared for slaughtering the whale as rapidly and often as we pleased. In reality, it was no difficult business, though a very bloody one. The romantic vision faded, and a prosaic truth appeared—that the whale, for all his bulk, was cowardly and helpless. We might, I feel, be gentlemen, and leave the story there.

Or we might be philosophers, and realize that in whaling man faces two opponents, the animal and the sea. An active desolation is his home; he has accomplices who sink or shatter a ship for every boat smashed by his own slow, ponderous flukes; and though we recognize that the whale has fallen from his first imaginary aspect, we may not leave the wider fight unsung. Toward the end of the whale's free period, one man arose who knew the whale in actuality and at the same time felt and saw in him a symbol of all hostile forces, all raging wild enmities of nature, all anti-human and eternal influences on the sea, all things in short for which the dragon stood in days when he was real to men. The portentous and mysterious monster was made to live again, well fitted for this symbol; the "wild and distant seas where he rolled his island bulk," his "undeliverable, nameless perils," and "all the attending marvels of a thousand Patagonian sights and sounds," made Moby Dick, the white whale, protagonist to Ahab in the finest work of dramatic power this continent has yet produced. In Melville you will find the rugged effort to portray the struggle between man and the universe, with all acknowledgment and recognition of the greatness that attends such contest, and with use of all the superstitions and the fears and braveries and cunning that man has learnt through seamen and the sea. "Moby Dick" is the apotheosis of whaling days; once more it has created the legendary monster of the past; and conquered so splendidly that at the end of the great conflict you come back from the silent ocean, silent; knowing the worst, feeling the best and uttermost that man may do or be; you come back as that sailorman, who, in a reverie,

> Stared like the figure of a ship
> With painted eyes to sea.

Conrad's Valedictory

TALES OF HEARSAY. By Joseph Conrad. New York: Doubleday, Page & Co. 1924.

Reviewed by William Rose Benét

HERE are the first and the last story that Joseph Conrad ever wrote, and two others. "The Black Mate," Cunninghame Graham tells us in his preface, must have been written about 1884. "The Tale" and "The Warrior's Soul" were written in 1917. "Prince Roman" is of the vintage of 1911. Cunninghame Graham praises "The Warrior's Soul."

> Nothing that I know of (he concluded) in any of his shorter stories equals the dramatic ending of "The Warrior's Soul."

We do not agree with this, but "The Warrior's Soul" is a memorable story. The mechanism of "The Tale" seems to us not altogether successful. Strangely enough the scene between the man and the woman, a fragment lost in darkness and no part of the real story, remains in one's mind quite as impressively as the indubitably striking impression of the fog in which the Northman meets his fate. The giving of the course that leads the Northman to his fate is a trick we have seen turned before. "Prince Roman," Conrad's only directly written Polish tale, is a horse of another color. Even the strikingly vivid drama of "The Warrior's Soul" seems to us to pale beside its sombre intensity, its quiet but biting irony. Great passages emerge, as when he who is telling the tale remarks by the way:

> This looks like mere fanaticism. But fanaticism is human. Man has adored ferocious divinities. There is ferocity in every passion, even in love itself. The religion of undying hope resembles the mad cult of despair, of death, of annihilation. The difference lies in the moral motive springing from the secret needs and the unexpressed aspiration of the believers. It is only to vain men that all is vanity; and all is deception only to those who have never been sincere with themselves.

"The Black Mate," the earliest story, develops, strangely enough, a regular W. W. Jacobs tale, in the Conradian style with which Conrad sprang into the literary arena fully armed. Jacobs would have made a delicious maritime farce of it. Conrad imbues it with a certain human pathos. It is almost the slightest of his tales, as to subject, and his humor is a trifle ponderous. The brooding of Conrad which persists through all his stories rather overweights the material.

Natually it is a joy to all Conrad admirers to be in possession of this new volume—would it were not the last! An assuredly great writer has passed, and Cunninghame Graham's preface—a distinguished bit of writing—is a fitting valediction.

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Too Good

THE RECTOR OF WYCK. By MAY SINCLAIR. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1925. $2.

Reviewed by HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

UNLIKE Miss Sinclair's last book, "Arnold Waterlow," "The Rector of Wyck" is a simple story, easy to read, with the problems of human nature that always deeply concern Miss Sinclair kept beneath the surface of the smoothly flowing text. "The Rector of Wyck" is a companion study to "The Cure of Souls," where the self-regarding luxury of another rector led to his spiritual damnation and considerable earthly comfort. The vice of John Crawford, rector of Wyck, is, if I read Miss Sinclair aright, goodness. He is a saint and his wife, Matty, is another, and together they sacrifice their aspirations for travel and intellectual broadening to the good of their parish, and the welfare of their children. Their girl is good from the beginning, so good that she makes goodness a profession and immensely enjoys her dispassionate labors in a London slum while her parents pine for her. The boy rebels against so much goodness, and is looked out for with such care that a streak of alcoholism finds its opportunity and he becomes a drunkard because there is nothing else to do.

This sounds a familiar story, but there is more than Miss Sinclair's perfect skill of narrative to give it qualities by no means commonplace. For goodness in this book does not result in mediocrity. The rector and his wife grow rusty for others, but their own relationship is perfect to the end. The parish profits. Miss Minchin, whose love for the rector cures her of a nasty spirit, profits. It is not felt by the reader that the clever London society which they lost, or even the chance for a richer life of the imagination, was worth the joy in each other which they kept and increased. It is the children who suffer. Such goodness, Miss Sinclair seems to say, sucks something from youth. There is not repetition of the parents' virtues, but opposition. It is not safe to have saints for fathers and mothers.

I am not sure that I read Miss Sinclair aright, since it is clear that she wrote this story with no formula in mind. She has observed, created, and you are left to draw conclusions. This does not make the best kind of tract, but it does make a good novel.

Saints are not so easy to write of as sinners, and the impossible Mr. Waddington, also of Wyck, made better reading than John and Mattie Crawford. That opinion may come from a malicious propensity in the reviewer: certainly the narrative in this new novel is of the author's best; and its quiet story as true as her more full-blooded books. But Miss Sinclair has accustomed us to cutting satire and bold experiments in the instincts. When she quietly observes she seems by comparison tame. Let us put it this way: that those who were shocked by "Anne Severn" and troubled by "Harriett Frean" will probably be delighted with this quieter novel—and the others will ask for more salt. That any (except settlement workers who are roughly handled) will dislike "The Rector of Wyck" is not likely. For all its quietness it is charged with the intensity of devoted lives.

A Soviet Trollope

TALES OF THE WILDERNESS. By BORIS PILNIAK. Translated from the Russian by F. O'DEMPSEY. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1925. $2.50.

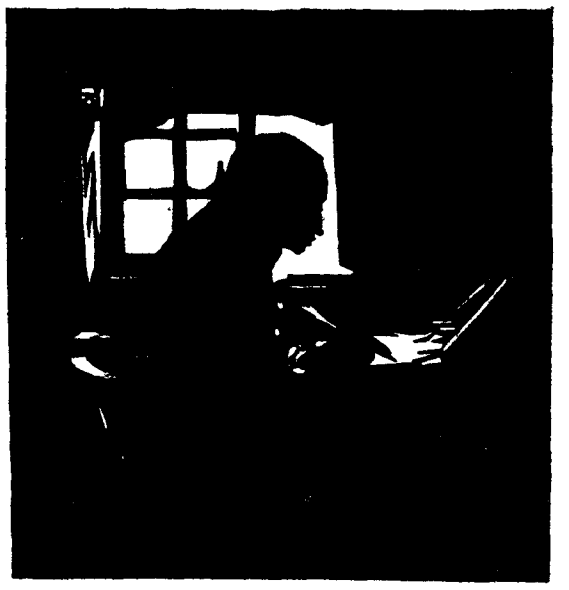
Reviewed by ARTHUR RUHL.

IF you sit in New York long enough you can see the world pass by, and here, out of the mystery of Soviet Russia, comes Mr. Boris Pilniak, done into English and bound in purple and magenta by Mr. Knopf, just as if he were living in the next street.

It is less than three years now, since I came out of the Kremlin one summer afternoon, with a list of names of authors who had done important work since the Revolution. Mr. Lunarcharsky had made up the list, which included himself, and he called special attention to a young Mr. Pilniak then living in the nearby mill town of Kostroma. It had taken much hunting to get that list of names—for most of the readers of books left in Russia assured one that nothing whatever had been done since the Revolution—and more hunting and waiting before Mr. Pilniak came into Moscow one day and we talked of the possibility of finding an American publisher for some of his work. I brought his "The Naked Year," a novel of the Revolution, back to New York that winter, but it was thought too queer and unintelligible for the American taste, and nothing came of it. What has happened in the meantime, I know not, but here, at any rate, are a dozen short stories, all quite straightaway and understandable, and worth the attention of those curious to know what sort of writers are growing up in that strange new Russian world.

In manner, these tales are not characteristic of present-day Russian fiction, for most of that is grotesque and "expressionistic," and is to old-fashioned fiction as "Beggar on Horseback," for instance, is to old-fashioned orthodox drama—only more so. But while all of them were written before "The Naked Year," nearly all have been done since the Revolution, and several deal with the new society, in which shipwrecked proprietors and scarcely less bewildered new masters are milling round together. They are therefore sufficiently characteristic of the present-day Pilniak, and Prince Mirsky, in a useful and interesting introduction, hazards the guess that Pilniak will "finally turn out something like a Soviet (or post-Soviet) Trollope," rather than follow the eccentric line which is now the Russian fashion.

The Revolution as an influence changing the whole drift and texture of a man's mind does not appear in these stories. So far as that sort of remaking goes, it seems to have run off Mr. Pilniak like water off a duck. In one story he pictures a man of



Immanuel Kant, By Heinrich Wolff
From "Immanuel Kant" (Yale University Press)

the old order as admirable and his successor as rather a poor sort; in another the old régime family are as worthless a lot as well could be. There are no politics in any of the tales. Mr. Pilniak, apparently, remains the artistic sponge, and soaks up whatever happens to be near. There was a rather amusing intimation of this in the summer of '23, when he took a trip to England, sending back weekly travel-sketches to *Izvestia*. London's smoke and rumbling diapason, Oxford's age and drowsy beauty—all those generations of young English gentlemen, going back endlessly—made a tremendous impression on the untraveled Russian, and he wrote back with such enthusiasm that perfidious Albion almost lost her perfidy and capitalistic Britain began to seem an almost comfortable place in which to be. The letters stopped abruptly!

In style, also, he seems rather chameleon-like, and while the observation and feeling are his own, his manner takes color from various predecessors. One or two of the stories are done in the manner of Chekov and the realists of the last century. An animal, or rather bird, story, "Over the Ravine," would seem to come pretty straight from Jack London, picking up a certain poetic rhythm on the way. "A Year of Their Lives" suggests Knut Hamsun's "Growth of the Soil."

In this latter story, which has moments of peculiar beauty, what we get, in effect, is the rhythm of the simplest sort of peasant life in the forest country of northern Russia. Spring, with the ice breaking up, and the village girls gathering in a little covey on the slope above the river, to sing their love songs and dance their ancient dances, while the husky young men look on like bull elk just come out of the forest; mating and summer and work for man and wife in the open, and then the long winter silence and nights by the fire with cabin walls cracking with cold; and then another Easter, and the birth of their child, and again Spring, and the girls singing their love-songs on the slope above the river. . . .

Nothing "happens." There are no accidents, surprises, or neat sequences of events. It is a sort of narrative chant rather than a story, and yet in Russia such a tale is a good deal less "mere poetry" than it would be in our more newspaper-made civilization. In parts of Russia, still, "life is like that." But only a few of the stories are literally "Tales of the Wilderness." The human beings in "The Bielekonsky Estate," "The Heirs," "The Forest Manor," as their titles suggest, are more like those we know or have seen in plays and books.

It seems a pity, in view of its subject, that Pilniak's revolutionary novel is too queer for us. Even Prince Mirsky agrees that it is and he presents a few translated paragraphs by way of proving it. But these earlier stories were worth putting into English, in any case, not only for their intrinsic worth, but as an example of what an artist may do in spite of the material difficulties and emotional uproar of the past few years, and as a sort of bridge between the world that ended in 1917 and that which is yet to be.

The Low Country Speaks

LAGUERRE, A GASCON OF THE BLACK BORDER. The same. S. C.: The State Press. 1925. $2.

WITH ÆSOP ALONG THE BLACK BORDER. The same.

THE CAPTAIN: STORIES OF THE BLACK BORDER. By A. E. GONZALES. The same.

Reviewed by HERVEY ALLEN
Co-Author of "Carolina Chansons."

THE day when even the cultivated reading public confidently expected "The Great Comprehensive American Novel," which was to express the spirit of all these states, has probably passed along with other adolescent literary aspirations. Instead, and in spite of our ruthless standardization, America has wakened to herself by geographical sections. New England, The Hoosier County, and the various divisions of the West can now be dignified by author, book, and dialect. To these the development of the last half-decade has added another section, distinguished in cultural traditions and peculiar to itself ethnically and historically. This is the strip of territory stretching along the South Carolina sea-coast from Georgetown south of Beaufort, into Georgia, penetrating roughly a hundred miles inland, and known locally as the "Low Country." A section which Mr. Ambroze E. Gonzales of Columbia, S. C., whose books we are considering here, has aptly termed the "Black Border."

This romantic and unique section is now thoroughly vocal and awake to its literary possibilities. Some years ago Mr. Heyward and myself in the preface to our collaboration "Carolina Chansons" called attention to its inherent values. Since then, John Bennett writing from Charleston, has contributed his "Madame Margot," a legend of old Charleston, probably still the most colonial city in America; Julia Peterkin writing from Lang Syne Plantation near Columbia, S. C., has given us one of the best and most sympathetic studies of negro plantation life in a generation; Eola Willis has recently added her study of the "Charleston Stage in the 18th Century," replete with the facts and romance of the early American drama; DuBose Heyward in "Skylines and Horizons" has added worthily to his poetical interpretations of his native soil,—and Ambroze E. Gonzales in a series of four rapidly written books, "The Black Border," "The Captain," "With Aesop Along the Black Border," and "Laguerre, a Gascon of the Black Border" has reproduced the strange life of the Low Country with its peculiar and difficult Gullah dialect in a collection of pleasantly humorous stories of negro characterizations, full of sympathy and pathos.

"Laguerre," the last of the series, may be taken as more or less typical of the others. "A gallant soldier of the Confederacy, formerly a wealthy Sea-Island cotton planter he (Laguerre) lived until about twenty years ago in a cottage on a war-ruined but once splendid plantation; planting a little, hunting now and then. . . . Educated in Paris before the war, and of distinguished Huguenot ancestry, he passionately loved France . . . and in his sensitive honor and courtly manners, and the great blond moustache and imperial worn à la Napoleon III,

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brought to Toogoodoo a touch of the second empire." Under the greenwood tree, the magnolia and the moss-draped live-oak, Laguerre set up his rural court, and as Justice of the Peace with a grand Gascon manner dispensed a lordly but withal kindly justice to the surrounding negroes, finding in this compensation for the poverty and restrictions of his environment. The circumstances of the trials, conducted in Gullah, provided characters, jests, and plots for the author. And it is not straining a point to say that these are invariably whimsical, unexpected, and delightful.

"Aesop" and "The Captain" are also collections of short stories about the negro, all written in the Gullah dialect of the Low Country, which is at once the joy and stumbling block of the reader. Gullah, probably a corruption of Angola, whence many of the Carolina negroes were brought in the days of the slave-trader, is a *pot-pourri* of African, French, and English,—all of which have gone the way of least resistance in their reshaping on the thick and lazy lips of the blacks. It is a dialect in the true sense of the word, distinguished by a guttural-quacking sound, and the use of a flat "A." Yard, for instance, is pronounced like "Y" placed before "add." There are also many distinctive words.

Mr. Gonzales is peculiarly fitted to write of the Low Country and about its people in their own *patois*. He has long lived among them in intimate contact with both Blacks and Whites as editor and owner of *The State*, one of the few newspapers of his section that has fought consistently for better social, political, and literary standards, even when their upholding meant personal danger. His volumes are published by the The State Company of Columbia, S. C., and are well printed, carefully proof-read, well bound, and furnished with attractive wrappers.

Even at this writing it is safe to say that Mr. Gonzale's book s are next in order of literary succession to "Uncle Remus" in the plantation tradition and they seem destined to take a by no means dusty place upon the shelf of Americana.

Winter Roses

THE POEMS OF SAPPHO. By EDWIN MARION COX. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1924. $15.

Reviewed by H. D.

IT were an impertinence of me to attempt any scholarly estimate of this notable and exquisite book. I could not anyway, even if I sincerely wanted to. I have, to begin with, no tithe of Mr. Cox's claim to the excellent scholarship, startingly evident on every page, beginning with the title, the "Poems of Sappho," with historical and critical notes, translations, and a bibliography, ending with the last, well set up paragraph that rounds off the final of the 154 beautiful pages of *de luxe* hand made paper.

I cannot see a book in terms of scholarship. I am all out of gear, disproportionate as I pick up this volume. I say the cover is blue, what a pretty grey blue. I feel the excellent vellum that binds the back. I think it feels, in my fingers, like the heavy bud of a half-opened magnolia or the back, slippery petals of a winter rose.

Now that is it. That is my exact clue. This excellent book seems to me, from start to finish, just that. Compared to the blood and anemone-purple of the inserted fragments, it is all of a too gentlemanly, too scholarly, too bloodless a calibre. Such names as Athenæus, Apollonius Rhodius, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Demetrius, Phiostratus, and Aristænetus greet us at every turn and serve to keep, resplendent, the meagre Sappho in her own place. I have no quarrel with this. These excellent gentlemen have intrigued and fascinated me for many years but does or does not this weighty volume purport to include translations? I turn to the foreword. "This present edition is an attempt to bring the subject more up to date." Our author implies that the Sappho of "H. T. Wharton first published in 1885, and subsequently reprinted" is somewhat out of date. Does he mean to imply (as we judge by their omissions) that Swinburne and Rossetti are also out of date? Mr. Cox is by far our superior in scholarship but has he seen on the slopes of a Greek island, thyme and wild anemone, wild dwarf iris matching in size the stalks of the low-growing hyacinth, wild hyacinth itself whipped over and across with flowering oranges? Would he dare leave out our old passionate fragment,

> I loved thee,—hark, one tenderer note than all—
> At this, of old time, once—one low long fall,
> Sighing—one long low, lovely loveless call,
> Dying—one pause in song so flamelike fast—
> At this, long since in old time overpast—,

if he had?

For myself I am superstitious. I feel that in the gallery or galaxy of translations of Sappho that particular translation of Swinburne is forever and ever wedded to that particular fragment. That no one, no matter how notable he may be has any right to omit the Swinburne from any volume purporting to be an up to date compilation of critical notes and translations.

Even this we could condone. Is it possible (we might conceivably give Mr. Cox the benefit of the doubt), he finds Swinburne, like others of the very modern schools, a little old fashioned? But here is the Rossetti quoted by our not quite "up to date" Wharton:

> Like the wild hyacinth flower which on the hills is found,
> Which the passing feet of the shepherds forever tear and wound
> Until the purple blossom is trodden into the ground.

Mr. Cox's insertion runs:

> O'er the hills the heedless shepherd
> Heavy footed, plods his way;
> Crushed behind him lies the larkspur,
> Soon empurpling in decay.

Follows a fitting and suitable note, suggesting as has frequently been done before, that our hyacinth is a larkspur, or even, he so far concedes this, a specimen of iris. Maybe—but does it matter? The very word hyacinth is pure Greek and as such would add a classic flavor to the most trivial rendering of the simple passage: "As on the hills the flower darkens on the ground." The word hyacinth has passed into common English usage and as such, even though it conceivably refers to some out of the way specimen of the digitalis or even of the iris family, should be poetically retained. The rose by any other name would *not* smell as sweet. But call a scentless, radiant-petalled oleander blossom a rose-laurel and it, by suggestion and shifting of color and sense values, obtains a peculiar fragrance.

Mr. Edwin Marion Cox's scholarship, we still insist, is excellent. His long historical preface and his bulky though well selected and tasteful bibliography leave little to be desired. But his flower-lore, his intuition, and his poetic values fall below our preconceived ideals. Are flower-lore and intuition of more or of less value than pure, undiluted scholarship when, in particular, they refer to an "up to date" volume of our much maligned and meagre poetess? Our Sappho seems to wear a cap and gown in this superior tone. *Chacun à son gout.* We prefer her, frankly, with a close bound chaplet of wild cyclamen or fragrant orange buds or even, should these exotic, perfumed flowers seem to offend you, with the frail, silver leaf of the bright, scentless, and immortal olive.

In the Farthest East

FAR EASTERN JAUNTS. By GILBERT COLLINS. New York: Henry Holt & Co. 1924. $3.50.

WANDERINGS IN SOUTHEASTERN SEAS. By CHARLOTTE CAMERON. Boston: Small, Maynard & Co. 1924. $5.00.

Reviewed by NORBERT LYONS

NEARLY the entire region synthesized under the term Far East is covered in these two travel books by British authors. Between them they present a comprehensive and interesting narrative of journeyings largely off the beaten path of tourist travel in that portion of the globe. Both volumes are profusely illustrated with original photographs.

Mr. Collins, a former member of the staff of *Punch*, confines his travels to Japan and China. Possessed of a keen sense of humor and a finished literary style, he carries the reader along by easy, amusing stages from Peking to Shimonoseki, Miyajima, Okayama, Kyoto, Tsingtao, Hankow, down the majestic Yangtze to Shanghai, thence to Hangchow and across the plains to Soochow.

There are occasional beautiful descriptive passages and the whole book is written with an authoritative background of historic, artistic, and sociological knowledge, but the author is a born humorist, and the ludicrous and incongruous constantly obtrude themselves into his observations, with the result that we have here a volume that is appreciably more entertaining than the average of its type. It is to be regretted, however, that so many of Mr. Collins's witty and humorous sallies and rambles have as their butt America and Americans, tourists in particular. We hope the American reading public will forgive Mr. Collins for his sins in that respect, as we have, for his book is really an excellent piece of descriptive writing and atones in its literary virtues for whatever derelictions it may possess from a 100 per cent. American chauvinistic standpoint. It gives you the "feel" and atmosphere of the countries it describes, and that, after all, is the chief merit in a book of travel.

* * *

Miss Cameron's work is by no means a literary masterpiece, but it is a corking good travel book nevertheless. What ever pretensions to style it may potentially have had, have been invalidated by a careless and hopelessly ungrammatical proofreader. The redoubtable Goold Brown himself, we fear, would have been stumped to parse such a sentence as this: "If you are in Weltevreden it is quite an easy matter to be introduced by a friend to your Consul, then you are invited to the dances, as the Dutch are most hospitable." However, the author has a gift of graphic description and a superabundance of that sixth sense known to the journalistic profession as a "nose for news." She has observed keenly and has sketched a series of vivid and piquant pictures of that romantic region lying between Singapore and the Antipodes, followed by a snapshot of that Australian wonder island, Tasmania.

Starting from cosmopolitan Singapore, with its busy waterfront, crowded Chinese quarter, opium dens, and luxurious bungalows, we are taken on side trips to the realm of the Sultan of Johore and the flowery port of Malacca at the very edge of the Asiatic jungle. Thence the journey leads to British North Borneo, a little-known colonial empire in which a white man reigns as sultan in a principality of some 7,000 square miles. The story of Rajah Brooke and his dynasty in Sarawak is one of the strangest of modern times. Java is next on the itinerary. This El Dorado of the Dutch nation has been abundantly written about by other travelers, but Miss Cameron has picked out odds and ends of fact and atmosphere that are quite original. We heartily agree with her in her deprecation of the native batik cult, for one thing.

From Java we go to the region made famous by Frederick O'Brien, stopping at the Tonga or Friendly Islands, with their happy, lovable people; at coral-stranded Haapai; at surprisingly up-to-date Nukualofa, with its able native premier; and finally at Pango-Pango, or American Samoa, where mahogany-skinned Adonises and Venuses habitually quote the Bible and live in perfect peace and contentment under the aegis of the Stars and Stripes. It is a fascinating journey, sincerely and interestingly told.

It hurts us to conclude our review of this most readable volume with a stricture, but we cannot help but challenge the accuracy of Miss Cameron's statistics where she gives the temperature of the coast of Java as varying from 27 degrees to 80 degrees, Fahrenheit! Our experience in the Far Eastern tropics compels us to characterize these figures as understating the case. But, then, maybe it is just another of those crimes chargeable to that blundering proofreader.

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HENRY SEIDEL CANBY ..... *Editor*
WILLIAM ROSE BENET ..... *Associate Editor*
AMY LOVEMAN ..... *Associate Editor*
CHRISTOPHER MORLEY ..... *Contributing Editor*

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A Lover of Freedom

FIGHTING THE WORLD. The Struggle for Peace. By COUNT MICHAEL KAROLYI. Translated by E. W. DICKES. New York: Charles & Albert Boni. 1925.

Reviewed by HENRY NOBLE MACCRACKEN
Vassar College

"I HAVE renounced my class."

That is the real crime of Michael Károlyi. Unforgivable by his relatives, who number the Szechenyis, the Polignacs of Paris, the Andrassys, his wife's family. Grand Dukes and Grand Duchesses of vanished régimes, loyal to a romantic *souvenir*, may freely enter our ports. The social democratic leader of Hungary, struggling for the double object of freeing his country from Teutonic domination and his people from the relics of a serfage only half redeemed in Kossuth's day, is debarred from public utterance. Daniel Webster, when Secretary of State, took a somewhat different attitude with regard to the political activities in America of the democrat, Louis Kossuth; but other times, other manners. We have just read from the pen of an American ex-ambassador to Italy a prose ode to the great Mussolini. The present oppressive rule in Jugo-Slavia, which is certainly not founded on popular government, seems to evoke no doubts as to our continued recognition of the dictatorship. Bulgaria, Turkey, Roumania, Hungary—not a word from the American Republic. Not a word of disapproval disturbs the American scene in regard to these violators of the principle of freedom. Only Károlyi, through Jászi, his intimate friend, is free to speak as he pleases in America—only Károlyi is denied the right of free speech and free asylum. But then, Jászi was a professor, a middle-class intellectual. He had not renounced his class.

"Fighting the World" is an extraordinarily direct, sincere, and discriminating autobiography of Michael Károlyi. Finished at Ragusa two years ago in Hungarian and now admirably translated by E. W. Dickes, it brings the author's life up to his induction as Prime Minister, October 31, 1918. The first chapter gives a sufficient background to the story, showing the life of a young aristocrat in one of the most exclusive circles in Europe. Historical interest is confined to Károlyi's activities of ten years from 1909 to 1918. The author's later life is not a proper subject for this review. The present volume displays him as a man of extraordinarily clear head and keen foresight. Two, at least, of his prophecies have since proved true, the forecast of the autonomy of Transylvania and the prediction of Caillaux's return to France. Equally sound have proved the planks of his liberal platform in the latter part of the war: that Hungary must free herself from German domination, set aside the compromise of 1867, carry forward and extend the liberties of '48 to the point of civil and political equality among Magyars and non-Magyars, and reach an early understanding with the Triple Entente.

Through the maze of intrigue surrounding the Austro-Hungarian court and particularly through the curiously complicated circles of Hungarian politics as conducted by the nobility, Károlyi's narrative runs smoothly and limpidly, affording what is to date the most lucid account of events in that country during the war. Károlyi is frank to admit not only the mistakes of his country and of his party, but his own mistakes. Nowhere more convincingly is the attempt by forcible assimilation to dominate an alien minority seen to have failed more hopelessly as a policy of aggrandizement.

Károlyi inevitably suggests a contrast with Masaryk. The Czech liberal leader was, however, a peasant, and sprang from the people. The Hungarian vainly thought he could combine liberal opinion and aristocratic social life. The one had to train his whole people in the principles of democracy and toleration supported by a victorious national guard, the other went down to defeat in the avalanche of economic disaster through a vain compromise with intricate political intriguers of his land.

He says of himself, "Without thinking it out, I imagined it was possible to fight for principles without adjusting one's own life to them."

It is a brave, a sincere, and probably a true story that Michael Károlyi has told, very tragic in the events. Few among the political victims of the great war deserve a more sympathetic hearing than this lover of freedom, who, with his gracious and high-minded wife, tried in vain to put into practice his simple faith in the Fourteen Points as the salvation of Central Europe.

The BOWLING GREEN

An Outline of History

EVIDENTLY it is time for the apology that is due every so often from anyone who exposes his frailty in public. Justly reproachful correspondents have leaped upon me for attributing to the late T. W. H. Crosland the line

And Death must dig the level where these agree.

Of course, it is not from Crosland, but from the Portuguese, viz., Mrs. Browning. My volume of Crosland's collected poems is still in the hands of some unremembered borrower, so I cannot even be sure which of his sonnets I was thinking of. But certainly if I imagined, even for a minute, that he had written that one, it was the sincerest tribute I could pay him.

The wittiest reproach came from W. R. B., who wrote me, parodying one of Crosland's poems:

If I should ever linger in thy thought
After I die,
Say there were many things he might have bought—
A hat—a tie;
Unhonoured by his fellows, with his song
He piped a feeble note;
BUT—
There were things he might have quoted wrong
And did not quote!

* * *

Speaking of tributes paid to authors, one sometimes wonders whether Mr. Galsworthy knows that his name—containing the necessary ingredients of ten letters without duplicate—is used as a price-code by thousands—perhaps I'd better say hundreds—of American booksellers. I have always believed that the name of a native author should be used for this grave function, and therefore suggest that of Don Marquis as an available substitute.

* * *

I think it was Bagehot who said no one can profitably study history without some knowledge of the private family connections, intermarriages, debts, calamities, etc., of the statesmen involved. The same is true of literature. One of the most fascinating books that could be written would be a sort of Back Kitchen sketch of any period of letters, dealing with the interior profiles of the world of writing. A publisher's tact in luncheoneering has sometimes affected the whole course of criticism; a meeting on a street corner may (though I doubt it) have cost a sleepless night to that already mythical and unshaken lady in Dubuque. I do not mean that such a work would needfully be a scandalous chronicle; far from it; it would be a valid and jocund reminder that polite comedy is inseparable from human doings. Literary historians have been too apt to do their work in the cutaway manner. Men like Disraeli *père*, or De Quincey in the "Reminiscences of the Lake Poets," saw the light. How one would relish, to turn to our own realm, the correspondence that may have passed between author and publisher when 706 unsold copies of "A Weck on the Concord and Merrimac Rivers" (of an edition of 1,000) were shipped to Mr. H. D. Thoreau. I used to meditate a fat volume on The Teens, which was to be a private history of American Literature in those interesting years, 1913-19. In the secrecy of my cloister I imagined various symbolic incidents, in the year 1912, as appropriate starting points for a vivacious preface. The graduation of Mr. Alfred Knopf from Columbia, Vachel Lindsay printing his "Rhymes to Be Traded for Bread," Don Marquis beginning work on the *Evening Sun*, Robert Frost giving up his job as teacher of psychology to go and live in England, Miss Amy Lowell correcting the proofs of her first book of poems, William McFee landing at Wilmington, N. C., with a mass of "Casuals of the Sea" MS.—all these bright events, more or less contemporary, would make a cheerful prologue. Then what fun to carry on the story, not as it is supposed to have happened, but as it actually did: the new pullulation of highbrow magazines and Poetry Societies, the entrance of high-spirited ladies into the bookselling trade, then the War coming upon the heels of this stripling renaissance, the post-War decuman billow of satire and Eros, the Mencken catharsis among sophomores, sudden appearance of new publishing houses, itineraries of British lecturers, flight of professors from universities into journalism, with an occasional footnote on the persevering trudge of the Modern Language Association keeping us aware of Chaucerian analogues. This is the work on which I shall spend years of happy and privately astounded research. If we had the whole tale of American writing humanely told, from the original Brook Farm down to the present one (George Ade's, in Indiana) we should have a story unsurpassed for entertainment and pathos. Perhaps after all one wins a new respect for literature if we remind ourselves that it is so pleasingly accidental. Literary chroniclers should be children of Disraeli.

* * * *

Of course, the compilation of any work of that sort, which would necessarily deal with many lively personalities, is subject to risks. Norman Douglas, in his privately printed pamphlet, "D. H. Lawrence and Maurice Magnus," passes Mr. Lawrence over some very brightly heated embers for his "novelist's touch" in his preface to "The Memoirs of a Private in the Foreign Legion." Douglas describes the "novelist's touch" as

a failure to realize the profundities and complexities of the ordinary human mind; it selects for literary purposes two or three facets of a man or woman, generally the most spectacular and therefore "useful" ingredients of their character, and disregards all the others. Whatever fails to fit in with these specially chosen traits is eliminated; must be eliminated, for otherwise the description would not hold water. Such and such are the data; everything incompatible with those data has to go by the board. . . . What the author says may be true, and yet by no means the truth. That is the novelist's touch. It falsifies life.

Mr. Douglas's quarrel with Mr. Lawrence does not concern me, but what does is that Mr. Douglas himself, only a few pages further on in his pamphlet, utters one of the oddest comments on Conrad that I have seen. Perhaps this, too, is the Novelist's Touch? I quote:

I have heard the late Joseph Conrad called a great psychologist, and that is a good example for my purpose. Well, Conrad was first and foremost a Pole and, like many Poles, a politician and a moralist *malgré lui*. These are his fundamentals. He was also a great writer with hardly an ounce of psychology in his composition. His genius is the reverse of the psychologist's; it consists in driving you along by main force; in making characters work out their salvation according to the approved principles not of psychology but of British morality, of the "right thing to do." Such was his implicit teaching: the "right thing to do." Everything that deviated from this precarious standard was anathema to him. . . . He seldom explored the human heart, that wonderful tangle of motives pure and impure (as they are called)—which was a pity, for he might have picked up some humour as he went along; he never so much as glanced into its depths lest he should discover, down in those muddy recesses, something rotten, something which had no right to be there.

I take the trouble to copy this down as I think it ought to go on record as one of the queer things sensitive and talented men say about one another. I find in my own bosom, as I read Douglas's pamphlet, sufficient evidence of the relativity of human opinion. Because much of Lawrence bores me, I am prepared to applaud his buffeting of that writer. Because of what Conrad means to me, I find the above passage renegade and absurd. (The idea of accusing Conrad of not having humor!) Yet it ought to be possible to write a history of a literary epoch, not sacrificing the bright punctuation of farce, without assuming that others are necessarily lacking in that profound benign penetration we all feel in ourselves. What is William Watson's sage word—again I quote dangerously from memory:

Important to himself as I to Me
Is every man that ever woman bore.

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

The Admiral's War

(*Continued from page* 593)

other attributes of American civilization, and yet raise the standard of living for a man of taste and susceptibility in America. If he would read no advertisements (except, of course, book advertisements!) for a year or so, that might help. If he would search for the pleasures that still remain inexpensive, even in America, that might help. But perhaps there is no solution as long as American standards demand that every one shall be as luxurious as his neighbor, and the only relief from what must become to a philosophic soul an intolerable burden of required possessions, will be the admiral's war, in which some unfortunate nation will steal our standards of comfort and let us learn how to live again, from the beginning up.

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Books of Special Interest

An Affair of Honor

MEMOIRS OF THE FOREIGN LEGION. By M. M. With an Introduction by D. H. LAWRENCE. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1925. $2.50.

Reviewed by THOMAS BOYD
Author of "THROUGH THE WHEAT"

THE introduction and the body of this volume are so closely merged that it would be more illuminating to discuss them as a single piece of work than to speak of them separately,—even though the prose of Mr. Lawrence is full of beautiful perceptions, of acute sensibility in description, while the writing of the deceased M. M. is sodden, slipshod, no better than that of the average police reporter.

It was in November, 1919, and Mr. Lawrence had not ceased to shudder with the remembrance of the bloody war as he walked down the Lung 'Arno where his friend, N*rm*n D**gl*s awaited him. With the friend was a stranger, a ridiculous little fellow who "had a way of saying 'physical'—a sort of American way, as if it were spelt fisacal—that made me want to kick him." All three were nearly penniless, but M. M. scurried around for delicacies to feed N*rm*n. M. M. "was patient and fastidious. And yet he *was* common, his very accent was common, and D**gl*s despised him."

There was justice for you! N*rm*n despised the little bounder and had him serving him like a woman; Mr. Lawrence who at least did not hate him got nothing but ill-fortune out of the acquaintance. M. M. would cheat somebody out of money and Mr. Lawrence would have to help him escape from the police . . . and in the end he had to read this manuscript which the fellow had written, the manuscript which he now introduces to the public.

During the war M. M., who was then living in Italy and who was supposed to have had Hohenzollern blood in his veins from one of the Royal Chambermaids, decided he ought to give his support to the Allies. He wrote letters to the various Red Crosss organizations, but they had all the help they needed. The next kind of service he thought of was with the Foreign Legion, and at once he took the boat from Naples to Algiers. What he looked for his Redeemer only knows, certainly it was other than what he found. He discovered that all the Legionaires were dirty, that all were Germans, and Jews—yet he speaks of counts and haidressers and Frenchmen being among them. He discovered that the uniform was not modish and that the daily drills were rigorous and he viciously criticizes the plumbing facilities of Algiers. In a short while he had gone through too much, really, and he angled successfully for a transferral from Sidi-bel-Abbes to Valbonne in France. There, the plumbing system was no better and he was further annoyed by a scrub named Attey from Baltimore who "used to talk literature, or rather American literature, by the hour, and was *au courant* with all the latest magazine and newspaper writers in America." So after two months of this frightful existence—almost as bad as, say, ten million men went through in training camp—he deserted and went back to Italy where the plumbing was better and the men wore socks. All this he seriously set down, with as much benefit, as much grace, and as much information as if he had copied off the routine bulletin of his battalion. And these "Memoirs of the Foreign Legion"—what a jest of a title—are not a first draft, they are the results of a third revision.

Mr. Lawrence says "let (this book) be read." Yes, but by whom? Mr. Lawrence says, "M. went where I could never go. He carried the human consciousness unbroken through circumstances I could not have borne"; and again, "The war was *foul*. As long as I am a man, I say it and assert it, and further I say, as long as I am a man such a war shall never occur again. . . . It shall go. A man I am, and above machines, and it shall go forever, because I have found it vile, vile, too vile ever to experience again." In both cases he perhaps flatters himself.

After M. M. deserted—after two strenuous months in the Foreign Legion—he cheated his way through several years in Italy, then went to Malta where he sponged from whoever he could, and when he had exhausted his material and the police were knocking on the front door he swallowed some painless poison and died. He owed a hundred pounds in Malta and, says Mr. Lawrence, "this hundred pounds must be paid back, . . . which it never will be unless this manuscript pays it back. Pay the gentleman's last debts, if no others." Who would not read the book in such a cause, to help pay for an affair of honor?

America Abroad

OUR FOREIGN POLICY. A History of the Foreign Policy of the United States. By RANDOLPH GREENFIELD ADAMS. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1924.

Reviewed by ALFRED L. P. DENNIS
Clark University

ONLY when one has stood in the trenches himself can the amount of hard work that has gone to the preparation of this book really be appreciated. The author almost disarms the critic by his opening quotation from William Penn which bespeaks his modesty and sincere spirit. He recognizes that the time has not yet come when by coöperation under the guiding hand of editorial authority a satisfactory attempt can be made adequately to tell the story of American international relations. Yet Dr. Adams does contribute materially to a popular survey of the more important topics and fields of the foreign policy of the United States. I hope no one will think me a cynic when I say that this volume should be of particular value to college and high school students and to women's clubs. Its value to more advanced students may be questioned, yet it is a book which will well serve to inform and attract the general reader in a field where there is crying need of such contributions. It is not a fundamental book, but a useful one.

A second edition will undoubtedly provide more careful reading of the proof. Indeed the typographical errors are obvious. The footnotes are largely to the best monographs and articles. They and the short bibliography represent, as the author states, the basis on which the book is constructed: "Many of us who have lived through the last ten years have felt the need of books on our foreign policy which will epitomize the results of research in the field, . . ." Such summaries as are given and such selection of topics treated reveal a mind that is acute, but which at times rushes to conclusions without due measurement of all the factors in the case. In particular the last five chapters dealing with China, Japan, and the events of the last ten years leave the impression that a better selection of facts might have been made. It is furthermore a bit disconcerting to discover that the Hay-Pauncefort treaty precedes the Spanish War in the table of contents and that a discussion of President Wilson's Mexican policy is later followed by a section on the Carribean in 1850-60. The topical treatment has its advantages, yet it breaks down without a constant system of cross referencing. In general, the foreign background is unfortunately lacking; and this volume should be read with a similar book on European and Asiatic diplomacy at hand.

The attempt to be popular has at times led the writer into the use of colloquialisms and into analogies that appear far-fetched. Yet as a whole the style is good. Such criticisms should not, however, blind us to the fact that Dr. Adams has done a really fine piece of work for the public that he is anxious to catch. Certainly this volume should have a wide sale.

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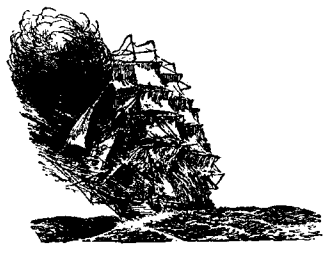

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A London Letter

By Mrs. Belloc Lowndes

THE passion—it can be called nothing less—for volumes of personal reminiscence becomes more intense as time goes on, and British publishers are now hard put to it to find noted men and women willing to write their memoirs. All sort of expedients are tried to "get round" the coy celebrity. The new Earl of Oxford who has often been approached but has always refused to write a book of the kind, is, it seems, engaged on a work which though it will be in no sense a book of reminiscences, cannot fail to be full of interesting and valuable recollections, if, as I am told, it is to take the form of a history of the House of Commons during the past fifty years. The writer, as H. H. Asquith, the most brilliant Oxford man of his generation, entered Parliament in 1886 as Liberal Member for East Fife. That, of course, is not fifty years ago, but it will be forty years ago next year, and from his first entry into public life Mr. Asquith was closely connected with the leading statesmen and brilliant social and literary world of the mid-Victorian era.

I hear that Mr. George Buckle, the conclusion of whose life of Disraeli is, in the opinion of good judges, the finest piece of solid biographical work accomplished in the England of our time, has accumulated a great mass of material for his forthcoming life of Queen Victoria. The whole of her vast correspondence has been put at his disposal by King George, and it is to be hoped that the first volume of what should be by far the most valuable contribution to both the personal and the political history of nineteenth century Europe yet written, will be published before the figure of "the Queen," as so many people still call King George's grandmother, has receded into a nebulous past.

The letters of a lifetime cannot lie. Every other kind of material drawn on for a biography not only often, but nearly always, lies. To my mind, the kind of "life," however brilliant, which owes nothing to the correspondence left by the man or woman whose career is under examination may be an admirable example of imaginative portraiture, but it cannot give the inner mind of the individual portrayed.

Dale Collins, whose first novel, "Ordeal," created a considerable stir last year and earned license to be compared, by some people, to Conrad, has finished a new story called "The Haven." It would not be fair to tell the whole plot, but I think it is fair to give, at any rate, an outline of the both original and amusing beginning. The hero is a wonderful film star, the best looking man of his day, and adored by feminine "film fans" all over the world. Wearying of this universal love and devotion, and rich beyond the dreams of avarice, he buys a small island in New Guinea, and retires there under another name to enjoy a long measure of rest and peace. The news, however, leaks out, and a number of enthusiastic women, including an American millionairess, and an English peeress, bribe the old sea captain who had been in the star's secret to take them one by one to his island, each lady believeing that she is the only woman to disturb her hero's hitherto free solitude.

A very different type of book will consist of a collection of Mr. Galsworthy's short tales. It will be issued under the name of "Caravan," and a story written early in the writer's career will alternate with one written in later years.

Among forthcoming "first novels" will be, I hear, two likely to be of special interest to those who are concerned with the future of British fiction. "The Tortoise-shell Cat," by Miss Naomi Royde Smith, one of the outstanding figures of the London literary world, well known for her admirable critical work, and her excellent dramatic criticism, will deal with a phase of feminine human nature which has seldom attracted novelists, though Théophile Gautier took it as the central theme of his most famous romance. "A Piano Quintet" is the other first novel in question. It is the work of Edward Sackville West, a very young man who is heir-presumptive to the barony of Sackville, and so future owner of Knowle. "A Piano Quintet" deals with the adventures of five men and women.

Scarce a week passes but I hear of some new book of memoirs dealing with the late Victorian era. A book of this kind, which should be of great general interest, has just been concluded by Lady Troubridge. Née Gurney, this lady and her sister, the late Countess of Dudley, were adopted in early youth by those two remarkable sisters, Adeline, Duchess of Bedford, and Lady Henry Somerset. Though Lady Troubridge is by no means an old woman, she has known most of the people worth knowing in every class of society during the last forty years, and she and her sister were both on terms of affectionate intimacy with King Edward and Queen Alexandria. She is daughter-in-law to that Sir Thomas Troubridge who lost both his legs in the Crimean War, and whose gallant bearing and piteous physical condition caused Queen Victoria, when he was wheeled past her at the great review at the end of the campaign, to burst into tears. The day following some one observed to a very famous statesman of that time: "I hear that when Troubridge went past the Queen she was touched." Whereupon the statesman answered: "I didn't see anyone touch her." "I didn't mean that, I meant that she was moved." "That also is quite a mistake, for she stood stock still the whole time."

The old question of an author's right to an original title and to how far a title influences the sale of a book has come up in an acute form with regard to Mr. Michael Sadleir, whose new novel has had no less than three titles, the first of which, "Fidelity," was actually printed before he was compelled to withdraw it by the sudden appearance of another story with the same name. One thing is certain. The author who has found what he regards as a new, arresting, and suitable title for a novel will do very well to keep that title to himself till his book is actually announced in the press. One hears now and again of a surprising change of title. Sir Philip Gibbs's brilliant new study of modern society, "The Reckless Lady," was, I am credibly informed, first called "An Old-Fashioned Father." I think one may venture to assert that for one novel reader who would ask for a book called "An Old-Fashioned Father," there are at least a hundred who would be attracted by the title, "The Reckless Lady."

Personally, I look with suspicion on the peculiar, the strange, and the "literary" title. I have a fondness for a type which is, for the moment, in complete abeyance—I mean such names of novels as "Can You Forgive Her?" "The Way We Live Now," "He Knew He was Right," "Not Wisely but Too Well." It has sometimes been said that the best title ever devised was "Vanity Fair," but I should like to put in a plea for "Les Trois Mousquetaires" and its child, "Soldiers Three," "A Tale of Two Cities," and "Under Two Flags."

I feel I cannot close this letter without saying a word concerning the late Mr. John Lane. As was the case with the late Mr. William Heinemann, Mr. Lane had an extraordinary instinct for what was new and original in imaginative literature. He was the first British publisher of many notable American writers, including, to give but one instance, Gertrude Atherton. Among the English authors in whom he believed for long years before his belief was justified by popularity was Mr. W. J. Locke. I think I am correct in saying that Mr. Lane published eight stories by Mr. Locke (and most brilliant novels they were) before their appeared "The Morals of Marcus Ordeyne," which brought to the one, we will suppose, fortune, and assuredly fame to the other. Yet another of Mr. Lane's early authors who was very much attached to him was Mr. Henry Harland, and here again he believed in his authors long before the public chose to do so.

There has been a widespread request for a continuance of the exhibition of manuscript of English authors from the Morgan Library on view at the New York Public Library, and, in consequence, the period has been extended to April 1. The original intention was to close the display March 1. Among additional manuscripts added to the exhibition recently is that of Robert Browning's "Asolando." This was the poet's last poem to come from the press and was published on the day that he died in Venice in 1889.

The publishing house of Kurt Wolff, in Munich, has recently announced the first publications in a series of books designed to foster understanding of America in German readers. The first book to be issued is the anonymously published "Hounch, Paunch, and Jowl," the authorship of which by Samuel Orwitz is now an open secret, and the second is Sinclair Lewis's "Babbitt."

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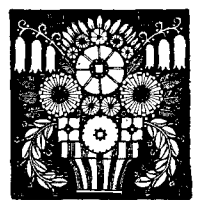

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Foreign Literature

German Art Books

ZWEI STROEMUNGEN IN DER ATTISCHEN KUNST DES V JAHRHUNDERTS. Von CARL BLUEMEL. Berlin: Josef Altmann. 1924.

DER FRIES DES TEMPELS DER ATHENA NIKE. The same. 1923.

KUNSTGESCHICHTE. By ANTON SPRINGER, Band I, Altertum. Twelfth edition by A. MICHAELIS and P. WOLTERS. Leipzig: A. Kröner. 1923.

Reviewed by GISELA M. A. RICHTER
Metropolitan Museum of Art

THE peculiar value of Herr Blümel's two monographs is that they have been written by a practising sculptor who has become an archæologist. The point of view is therefore primarily that of an artist with an intimate knowledge of the craft. Since so much of our archæological literature is written from a different approach—historical, scientific, or philosophical—it is refreshing and very instructive to have the purely artistic and technical interest here placed in the foreground. In the "Zwei Strömungen," Blümel analyses some of the chief sculptures of the second half of the fifth century from the point of view of composition and general conception. He finds two distinct tendencies at work—the new pictorial, in which all details are submerged into a unified whole, and the old plastic, in which the composition, the figures, and every detail are conceived as single entities. As conspicuous examples of the first he cites the Parthenon pediment figures, of the latter the statue of Athena Parthenos. The analysis of the various ways in which a sculptor can see and conceive his statue or relief is of great interest; for it is rare that an artist becomes articulate and helps the art historian by an account of his methods.

The monograph of the frieze of the Athena Nike temple is welcome both for this same emphasis on the artistic side and for the excellent illustrations of the reliefs, the best so far produced. The conclusions arrived at, however, regarding the dating of the frieze are not convincing. The author postulates two periods—one between 450-440 B. C., when the temple was first planned, to which he assigns the four blocks, b, c, e and o; and a later one about 420 when it was finally completed, to which the rest of the sculptures are allotted. But the draped female figures of slab b, though they may vary from the Erechtheion Karyatids in such details as the carving of the individual folds, are intimately related to them in the more important quality of the transparency of the drapery. In no figure of the Parthenon frieze does the leg show through the garment so distinctly, with the whole contour on both sides clearly marked, as in figures 10, 12, or 14 of the Athena Nike frieze; and this rendering of the drapery as completely transparent, is the peculiar characteristic of the sculpture of the last quarter of the fifth century. That the frieze was executed by different hands is clear; for the style varies considerably; but there is no portion which can be consistently placed as early as 450-440 B. C., or even as early as the Parthenon.

Springer's "Kunstgeschichte" has enjoyed a well deserved popularity for over forty years. Published originally in 1879 merely as a picture album under the title of Kunsthistorische Bilderbogen, it assumed its present form in 1895 when a consecutive text was added. The progress of archæology is duly reflected in the various editions of the first volume. It was placed on a sound scientific basis when Michaelis in 1898 practically rewrote the text and supplied the framework which has been adhered to ever since. Every few years a new revision and enlargement appeared, keeping the work strictly up to date. After Michaelis's death this task of superintending new editions fell to Paul Wolters, another archæologist of the first rank. The result is that the present twelfth edition is the best comprehensive short history of ancient art now in existence. The well-written, accurate text, the profusion of good illustrations, the inclusion of all the various branches of the subject—combine to make it a reliable and convenient reference book; a volume in fact which every student and teacher likes to have constantly within reach. The new plates of the archaic male statue in Munich, the superb fifth-century Niobid in Rome, the profile view of the charioteer of Delphi, a slab of the Parthenon frieze reflect the emphasis we now place on the earlier Greek works. Good half tone pictures of the new statue bases from Athens are embodied. New features are moreover the rewriting of the prehistoric sections by experts on those periods—C. Schuchhardt and F. W. von Bissing.

Reminiscences

PAROLES D'UN SOLITAIRE. By LOUIS DE ROBERT. Paris: Albin Michel. 1924.

IN these reminiscences Mr. Robert discloses snapshots of his intimate life, discusses the art of writing and living, and relates humorous anecdotes in which such personages as Zola, Loti, Rostand, Bernhardt, Battaille, etc., are the prime characters. Interspersed among them are not a few well-worded and thought-rounded *pensées*. What chiefly characterizes these reminiscences is the healthy attitude of the author. Vital questions are discussed by him briefly and informally yet illuminatingly. A sick man physically, he is in possession of a sound mind; and he views life stoically, sanely, serenely. His style is as his thinking—lucid, limpid, lyrical.

The second part of the book consists of a series of love letters, written by Danise Rambaud, a timid woman bordering on spinsterhood, to François Chaumont, a married man. Both are musicians, and their work draws them together.

As one reads these letters one feels the delicate intensity of Danise's love. Old as is the story of the woman mistaking man's infatuation for true love, conscious as one becomes of the similarity of content and spirit between these letters and those written by Marianne, the Portuguese nun, the disappointment of Danise comes to the reader as true and keen. We see her repressing her sex emotions until she believes them dead; how quickly they explode into flame at the first advances made by François; how she idealizes him as the man she has been waiting for so many years; how stoically she bears her tragedy when the satiated François disappoints her so cruelly; and how firmly she refuses to see him. One cannot but sympathize with her.

THE current catalogue of C. F. Libbie & Co. of Boston is devoted to "An Extraordinary Collection of Children's Books of Olden Times" including 168 lots, many items in immaculate condition, nearly all illustrated by woodcuts, some in bright colors.

* * *

Frederick A. Stokes Company will soon publish "The Lost Speech of Abraham Lincoln," by Honore Willsie Morrow, a story founded upon the tradition of a remarkable speech by Lincoln said to have had the effect of holding together the newly formed Republican party at a time when it was threatened with disintegration.

By THE PHOENICIAN

RECENTLY we have read two plays. The first was *John Howard Lawson's* "Processional." A reading of it did not greatly impress us; but when we saw the play upon the stage a few days later the writing sprang into intense life. We have rarely so enjoyed a production. The last act rose to a climax that moved us as nothing on the stage has moved us for a long time. The vitality of the performance is glorious. Slapstick, pathos, irony are all blended in thundering good melodrama. Star-spangled hilarity romps across the grimmest of American scenes. Burlesque links arms with Greek tragedy. Lawson is a remarkable sardonic dramatist with a thorough appreciation of the possibilities of vaudeville in developing a new and refreshing kind of play, a realistic fantasia of startling energy and human richness, not to speak of sustained episodic excitement.

The second play we have read is *Dana Burnet's* "It Is a Strange House." Burnet's play is a decided departure for this writer, by far the most individual thing he has yet done. It is a better reading play than is Lawson's; but doubtless, somehow, for that very reason, it would be less effective upon the stage. Nevertheless we cannot but believe that it could be made a striking production. It is highly imaginative social satire done by a poet with a sturdy grip on dramatic values. Modern civilization is "The House," from the shams of which Laura and Stressman finally free themselves. Lawson as a dramatist cleaves closely to What Is. Burnet ends his play by imagining What Might Be. He has, at least, produced a remarkable book, a play we read through at one sitting, so absorbing did we find its symbolism. This drama, like Lawson's, follows the general tendency of modern stage fantasy that *Molnar* and the *Kapeks* induced in this country. Here and there it also reminded us a little of *Strindberg*, in its general visualization. Those who know Dana Burnet only through his workmanlike novels and magazine short stories of the popular type should be doubly interested in his success as an expressionist. His work is vivid and full of intelligence.

Our attention has been called to a masterpiece of mixed metaphor in *Walter M. Hill's* (of Chicago) advertisement of "The Infinite Passion," which is the celebrated *rimas* and the "Letters to an Unknown Woman" of *Gustavo Adolfe Becquer*, the Spanish poet, some of whose single poems *John Masefield* has now and then translated. *Young Allison* is the present translator. But we regret that, in speaking of the "Letters," the publisher should describe them as "Etched by a master-hand, they paint a fresh and beautiful facet of love, poetry, and faith viewed all as manifestations of the same Cause, with an accompaniment of good humor and epigrammatic staccato."!! Here we have etching, painting, the art of the lapidary, and the click of the typewriter inextricably goulashed—God save the mark!

Crossworading has become a plague. *Simon & Schuster* have now put forth *The Cross Word Puzzle Magazine; Ben Huebsch*, in "The Long Green Gaze," has published the first Cross Word Puzzle Mystery Story; and "Four Letters Meaning Murder," running in the aforesaid magazine, is another mystery story of the same ilk.

Michael Arlen's agents request a correction of our statement that the American movie rights of "The Green Hat" have been sold for $25,000. Somebody was stringing us!

Christopher Morley has recently started a new boom for *James Stephens's* "In the Land of Youth"; but we, with our usual perversity, have been reading Stephens's "Deirdre" instead. People seem to have dismissed these books as scholarly (and hence necessarily dry) recountings of Irish myth, little realizing that Stephens has completely clothed the mere dry bones, and sketchy skeleton of legend with a richly imagined narrative of his own. There is no better fight in recent fiction than that (in "Deirdre") of the sons of Uisneac in the Red Branch; and when Conachur defeated them in the end, by calling upon the spells of Cathfa, our heart nearly broke in our breast. The hate we still hold for the fabulous Conachur is a measure of the vitality of the tale Stephens has made. Oh, but that last "scrap" is glorious:

> Two figures detached themselves in the moonlight. They were bounding like great cats, and wherever there was mass they bounded into it, burst through it, and leaped on. . . . The two figures leaped at the ramsmen. The ram was dropped, and the unarmed crew fled yelling. The door that was being battered opened and shut, and the two figures were gone.

That was how they did it in their sorties, and finally they captured the ram. A master strategist was Naoise and a braw fighter! "Deirdre" is more than an heroic story, it is a grand heroic poem, and Stephens possesses the most rare power of making legend alive, throbbing and glittering. And through this story that is like a brave song runs the deep rill of his peculiar laughter that has in it the true joy of life.

A skyscraper of snivel . . . enough gadgets for melting to equip a gelatine factory.
—*Manchester Guardian* review of the play *Pollyanna*.

* *

While studying for Congregational ministry preached a sermon in Vermont on "Fools" that led to demand for his resignation.
—Biography of *Theodore Maynard, Who's Who in America*.

* *

My personal mail is positively bewildering. Everyone I ever heard of, and a great many people I have never heard of, want me to do something that will take a lot of time, and I have less time than most people I know, for I have sixty years, and by the way, I have seen Carcassonne also.
—*A. Edward Newton*, in a letter.

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The New Books

The books listed by title only in the classified list below are noted here as received. Many of them will be reviewed later.

Belles Lettres

ADVENTURES IN CRITICISM. By SIR ARTHUR QUILLER-COUCH. Putnams. 1925.

Few critics would care to have their regular contributions to a periodical published in book form thirty years later. Time has a disagreeable trick of reversing contemporary literary judgment. In fact, the editor of this *Review* declares that no critic should be judged as prophet. The critical articles by "Q" have been affected only slightly by the passing of a generation. Originally printed in *The Speaker,* collected in book form in 1896, these critiques have just been reissued. The earlier volume contained thirty-seven articles; the recent one only twenty-nine; but the soundness of the literary estimates in all of them remains constant.

In authors, these estimates range from Samuel Daniel to John Davidson; in topics, from Externals to The Poor Little Penny Dreadful. Post-graduate research students should learn from the discussion of "Robinson Crusoe" how to investigate and theorize; enthusiasts from the passages on R. L. S. how to praise; objectors from Who Wrote the Odyssey how to condemn; and appreciators from the remarks on Mr. George Moore how to discriminate.

This last cited essay antedates Mr. Moore's strictures on Mr. Hardy by a quarter of a century. It keenly but kindly proves why "Esther Waters" is and must always remain a better novel than "Tess of the D'Urbervilles." As is fitting, the author who wrote fiction so long and successfully drops *obiter dicta* that charm the general reader and in all probability prick the novelist; but what is rarer is that the writer speaks also as a cultured reader, for in the fields usually reserved to erudite scholarship he follows straight paths of appreciation to conclusions of profound significance. Best of all, perhaps, is the charm of "Q's" English.

Biography

SAINTE-BEUVE. By *Lewis Freeman Mott.* Appleton. $5.

LETTERS FROM AMERICA. Translated by *Ray W. Pettingill.* Houghton Mifflin. $7.50.

SEVENTY YEARS OF LIFE AND LABOR. By *Samuel Gompers.* Dutton. 2 vols.

Fiction

A VOICE FROM THE DARK. By EDEN PHILLPOTTS. Macmillan. 1925. $2.

Mr. Phillpotts can be counted on to turn out an interesting mystery story, with something more than a mere succession of exciting incidents to give it character, and more than average fluency of style to lend it ease. This latest yarn moves briskly forward from the eerie cry that rings out on the startled ear of a retired detective as he lies asleep in an English country hostelry to the solution of that phenomenon presented on the last page. It is an ingenious tale whose complications follow plausibly one upon the other and the emphasis of which is laid on the psychology of the criminal quite as much as on his deeds. Mr. Phillpotts manages to withhold suspicion as to the manner in which the initial crime on which his narrative hinges was committed until well toward the close of his book, and if the devices he employs to bring about his situations are neither unhackneyed nor unmelodramatic they are at least presented so that interest in their development is sustained until the end. There is considerable subtlety in his portrayal of the means by which the detective who is the hero of the tale insinuates into the consciousness of the criminals he stalks the mental attitude through which they are brought to self-betrayal—enough to overbalance the rather incredible agility of the old ladies whose evidence leads to their being traced.

HIS WIFE-IN-LAW. By MARIE CONWAY OEMLER. Century. 1925. $2.

The present novel seems to suffer from more than a usual share of negative qualities in plot, character, and incident. It has an average surface excellence of writing, which virtue is rendered entirely futile beneath the burden of stereotyped material the author has employed for her variation of an all too familiar theme. The initial step toward action is taken when the magnificent caveman hero kidnaps the coddled and imperious heroine from her ancestral Southern castle, compels her to marry him, keeps her temporarily a prisoner on an island where he goes through the gestures of making her love him, then, her pride proving too strong for his passion, chivalrously sending her home to her scandalized people.

Need we add that no sooner is the enchanting young man out of her sight than she realizes how profoundly she loves him, and that the remainder of the book is merely a preparatory marking of time until the two are blissfully reunited! This prolonged interlude of separation is occupied by the anticipated bagful of ancient tricks, culminating in the hero's loss of memory and sense of identity in a South American jungle. The heroine aids in his rescue and returns with the mental invalid to the Carolina island of the beginning. There he is restored to consciousness of the past by the sound of a dropped bedroom key arousing his urge toward the cosmic, which incident caused us rude and immoderate laughter. It was not intended to be funny, but for us it provided the only enjoyment we found in a painfully tedious book that could have been vastly improved by the removal of a hundred superfluous pages.

TUMBLEBERRY AND CHICK. By WILLIAM J. HOPKINS. Houghton Mifflin. 1925. $2.

Mr. Hopkins has chosen to center this picture of a Massachusetts coast village about the same physical and mental situation which Bud Fisher has made famous with Mutt and Jeff. Mr. Tumbleberry is very tall and thin and has a way of getting Mr. Chick to do all the dirty work. Mr. Chick is very short and rotund and protestingly does what Mr. Tumbleberry wants. About these two are grouped other villagers of varying social importance. In general the story is done after the manner of Joseph C. Lincoln: a simple tale of the American folk, with much dialogue and

(*Continued on next page*)

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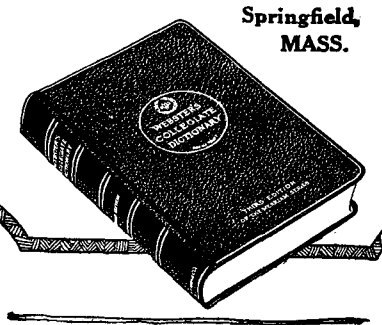

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The New Books

Fiction

(*Continued from preceding page*)

local color. Here the resemblance of Mr. Hopkins's work to Mr. Lincoln's stops. His characters have not the humanness, his dialogue the humor, or his narrative the movement which enliven the work of the agreeable and prolific Mr. Lincoln. "Tumbleberry and Chick" is dull, stodgy, and so slow as to be almost motionless.

COBWEB PALACE. By ROSAMOND NUGENT. Appleton. 1924. $2.

The title "Cobweb Palace" gives an excellent key to this fragile romance. It is a pretty thing, but made of such thin stuff that it offers little for the reaching fingers of the mind to lay hold on. In the glamorous atmosphere of old Oxford a fifteen-year-old girl meets a boy two years her senior and falls in love with him. For a few days the affair is a summer idyl. Unforseen disaster separates them, and for three years the girl pursues her way alone. She becomes a musical comedy star and is ardently wooed by a young nobleman who is, in a gentlemanly way, something of a caveman. The boy, in the meantime, has written a novel and returns to the story in time to rescue her from dishonor. The tale is fashioned well enough, with an occasional flash of beauty which lifts it higher than it actually deserves. Oxford and the English watering places appear in dreamy loveliness. The whole story, in fact, seems like the day dream of a schoolgirl. The pain of life is present only enough to lend a tang of excitement and occasionally bring forth a sentimental tear. Romance is there in fine array, and passion runs provocatively, but never shockingly, through. One sees the "cobweb palace" shimmering in the sun, but there really isn't much there.

IF DREAMS COME TRUE. By ALICE ROSS COLVER. Penn. 1925.

There is a type of novel—a cross between realism and the fairy tale—wherein great fortunes pour as if by magic from the purses of wealthy benefactors into the hands of favored youths. Such a story is Alice Ross Colver's "If Dreams Come True." The title of this book is well chosen, for "making dreams come true" is literally the theme of the narrative and the business of the hero, who is presented with a check for fifty thousand dollars by his affluent grandfather in order that he may execute his plans for helping the needy. How he succeeds in those projects, and how incidentally he prospers in a love affair not directly related to those projects, is told in a style that is interesting although not distinguished; and the reader will find that the plot holds at least the average measure of entertainment and that the story is written in a spirit of kindliness and charity that may prove effective.

LIFE AND ERICA. By GILBERT FRANKAU. Century. 1925. $2.

Mr. Frankau looses his shafts at the less conventional life such as is led by writers, artists and their kind in London. What isn't shallowly cynical is wicked. The more durable satisfactions of existence aren't to be found in such an atmosphere, or in a mad rush for material success, but somewhat nearer the English countryside, and in honest love. This is no new theme, nor is the contrary of the proposition a novel one in these times. Mr. Frankau's story, however, is one of some convincingness as a narration of incidents leading up to the near seduction of a girl by a clever and villianous man. It is a better piece when looked upon as merely this story than when assayed as an attempt to paint a larger picture. The canvas of which the affair of Erica Merryon and T. W. North is the chief part is a detail, not a composition giving one the sense of having viewed a whole.

Erica Merryon, a girl of eighteen, living in Collaton, has a *flair* for caricature which has attracted the attention of London editors. She has an offer of ten guineas a week to go to the city, and despite the advice of Robin, a disabled soldier and painter, a friend and lover, she accepts. He warns her not to dare London, not to pursue mere material success. Her first choice of lodgings with an old friend is unfortunate; she leaves Doffy, an opportunist in love, in disgust. Yet she herself rebels in the spirit against the yoke of marriage. A mild affair with an attentive lover leaves her unstirred except for the episode of one passionate kiss.

Her art succeeds. T. W. North, the greatest novelist of the day, notices her—a chance meeting first, next an intriguing note. The steps by which this clever elderly seducer plays upon Erica's sympathy and interest, and leads her to the final moment of surrender, interrupted only by accident, is a story built up with skill. Yet to admit that is also to admit that Erica lacked so much of being a woman with even ordinary understanding of the world about her as almost to prevent her from being interesting as a heroine. The truth is Erica is by way of being dull. This momentary reflection of Erica upon her true character—"underneath her self sure exterior there dwelt a totally different Erica, a rather priggish, slightly sentimental, wholly virtuous little person whose existence she herself might have suspected but had never really understood"—is pretty close to being the case as it is. Mr. Frankau's dénouement is almost a one hundred per cent triumph for the old fashioned virtues, relieved, however, from the banal by the really fine courageous honesty with which Erica faced the truth about her willingness in the affair with North.

PORTUGUESE SILVER. By CHARLES NEVIL BUCK. Century. 1925. $2.

The scene of this mildly exciting tale is a Cape Cod summer resort, and the characters are Italians, Portuguese, and Americans, most of them in the amateur or professional detecting business. One Costello, a crook, is wanted by the Italian government; and the suspicions of detectives at once fall upon Lewis Defuniac, who lives on his yacht at the resort. Defuniac, unaware of the interest he is arousing, proceeds to fall in love with an exotic creature, a Portuguese maiden who resembles a bird of paradise strutting among the hens in the back yard, and who bears the delightfully romantic name of Ella Shaw. This maiden, however, feels that she owes allegiance to her lover, Manuelo, a beach comber, and Mr. Defuniac gains nothing by his suit save for an empty avowal of love. A detective on the trail of Costello joins forces with Manuelo, and the two set about trying to prove that Defuniac is Costello. More detectives and criminals arrive on the next train, and things begin to assume the look of a merry-go-round of crime, with criminal hot on the heels of detective and detective fast after criminal. This pleasant play ends with the unmasking of Defuniac as a master detective from Italy and Manuelo as Costello: Defuniac, upon the obliging suicide of Manuelo, who turns out to be Ella Shaw's husband, marries the girl and all ends merrily.

GERMINAL. By EMILE ZOLA, with an Introduction by Havelock Ellis. Knopf. 1925. $4.

"Germinal," the latest newcomer among the handsome Borzoi Classics, is the third of Zola's books to be included in the series. Since the collections ranges in time as far back as Defoe, it is difficult to understand why "Nana," "L'Assommoir," and "Germinal," should all three be admitted, and yet everything of Balzac and Stendhal—thus far—left out. To be sure, this is "a series of world masterpieces, not as a rule otherwise available in fine editions"; but Stendhal, certainly, lacks fine editions far worse than Zola; and the prolific Balzac comes only in fine sets.

For "Germinal," however, there is a translation and introduction by Havelock Ellis. His version into English, which is a very competent piece of work, was done more than thirty years ago under interesting circumstances recorded in the preface. This introduction does not attempt, on Mr. Ellis's part, any real critical analysis of the book; but he permits himself to say, in agreement with a number of French critics, that "Germinal" is the only one of Zola's books likely to endure; that it is a creation with the materials of which Zola was thoroughly acquainted, a work fine in style and structure, "'a great fresco' as Zola himself called it, a great prose epic, as it has seemed to some, worthy to compare with the great verse epics of old."

TONGUES OF FIRE. By ALGERNON BLACKWOOD. Dutton. 1925. $2.

In those elusive and mysterious psychic realms where fact gives way to fancy, where imagination holds sway over reason and science does not dare to tread, Algernon Blackwood disports himself perhaps not exactly as a pathfinder or a discoverer and yet as one by no means to be scorned as an originator. His collection of short stories, "Tongues of Fire," gives proof of the allurement which he finds in the Hidden and the Unknown and of his ability to construct entrancing stories out of the palest and most tenuous threads of speculation.

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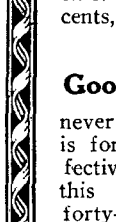

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The Fourth Dimension is perhaps not a theme that the average writer of fiction would choose, yet in "The Pikestaffe Case" Mr. Blackwood has made it the basis of an engrossing and provocative tale; the significance of dreams and visions, the power of mental telepathy, and the influence of strange ghostly beings sprung from the earth, may not offer tempting material to one who holds that literature should be a "transcript from life," yet Mr. Blackwood has dealt with all these themes with assurance and effect and has invariably succeeded in producing that sense of reality which is the first essential of imaginative writing.

Not all the stories, indeed, reach the same level, and not all are constructed with the same thoroughness and in the same detail. Several are no more than sketches, and the final piece has not even a narrative element; yet on the whole Mr. Blackwood reveals himself as a writer of rare stories, of stories written on distinctive and sharply individual lines, of stories that stimulate the imagination and occasionally even provoke the reason. Certainly, the reader of "Tongues of Fire" will be rewarded with more than the average amount of entertainment as well as with much food for thought and for conjecture.

FRONTIER LAW. A Story of Vigilante Days. By WILLIAM J. MCCONNELL, in collaboration with Howard R. Driggs. Yonkers: World Book Co. 1924. $1.20.

The latest volume of the Pioneer Life series gives the frontier-time reminiscences of ex-Gov. McConnell of Idaho. McConnell was a Michigan boy who crossed the plains in 1860, at the age of 20. After some months of mining in California and a year or more of school-teaching in Oregon, he followed the gold rush into the Boisé region in 1863. Here, employing himself at truck farming, he prospered. Desperados and horse thieves abounded, and for a time there was no civil government able to cope with lawbreakers. For three years, first as a member of the vigilantes, and later as a deputy United States marshal, he helped to bring a sadly harried community into a condition of peace and order. By 1866 the job seems to have been accomplished.

Except in the occasional bits of dialogue, which tend to become stilted and unreal, the narrative is simple and straightforward. The volumes of this series are intended for a public (especially its adolescent part) that wants a "true story" of the West—a public unaddicted to the demoralizing two-gun, bad-man type of fiction, but yet indisposed toward detailed history. This book well fulfils that purpose. Though built of fact, it tells a tale, and in parts a thrilling one.

EGBERT. By W. A. DARLINGTON. Penn. 1925. $2.

The basic idea of this novel is so obviously idiotic that the reader whose fiction must be held within the strict limits of realistic probability or the wider bounds of pure romance may find it uncongenial entertainment. But if one has a weakness for sheer farce, for such hilarious and nonsensical incidents as follow the transformation of a snobbish young Englishman into the living body of a rhinoceros, one may find simple diversion in "Egbert." The latter has spoken disparagingly of magic and magicians in the presence of a stranger, who retaliates by changing Egbert into a horned pachyderm retaining all his human attributes except form and speech. This occurs with no one but Egbert's friend Ted to witness the phenomenon. The task of caring for the hapless Egbert devolves upon Ted and Egbert's fiancée, Kathleen. How they solve their problem, with Egbert as the featured performer of a trained animal "turn" in the music-halls, and his final restoration to his original earthly form, fill the balance of the tale. It is well written, not devoid of elementary humor and, though absolute nonsense, gives indications that its author is capable of better things.

THE WIFE-SHIP WOMAN. By HUGH PENDEXTER. Bobbs-Merrill. 1925. $2.

Mr. Pendexter dedicates the present work to his grandson, without giving the young man's mental age or its sum as recorded in years. From our own impression of the book, we should judge that a normal child of twelve will find it a paradise of healthy, harmless, and exciting adventures. Beyond that age its effectiveness would be doubtful, but grown-up devotees of Cooper's tales should not deem this an unworthy follower of the great tradition. The period is the early eighteenth century, the scene Louisiana in the vicinity of New Orleans during the days of French colonization under pressure of John Law's famous Mississippi Bubble. The constant flow of blood from he-men, both Redskins and whites, engaged in violent combat with musket, tomahawk, arrow and bow, proceeds in quantities sufficient to fill countless proverbial buckets. It goes without saying that the action is swift and its interest keyed to a pitch that will thrill the juvenile pulse rapturously. Mr. Pendexter gives careful, if brief attention to the details of historic background and events, in which passages we found a grateful relief from the wallow of puerile carnage through which the main narrative wades.

THE JUDGMENT OF PARIS. By CARLETON KEMP ALLEN. Dodd, Mead. 1925. $2.

Mr. Allen's novel merits the attention of the many readers who maintain that Aldous Huxley is "over their heads," and that even Michael Arlen is too subtly sophisticated for their complete enjoyment. For the present comedy, without descending to the realm of obvious burlesque, contains humor so richly and easily appealing that one finds difficulty in conceiving of a reader on whom its effect would be wasted. It is never "screamingly funny," but throughout there are developed quietly ridiculous situations over which the reader may find himself constantly chuckling. "Wise cracks" and the heavier exaggerations for laugh producing are entirely missing. In fact there is an underrunning vein of broad satire, which, unfortunately, toward the close, turns faintly ironic.

The material for the plot is derived from the unexpected inheritance by an indolent, bibulous, and impractical bachelor in his fortieth year of 200,000 pounds. He is immediately beset by scheming females, widows, "flappers," mothers with marriageable daughters, who drag him from the lazy peace of his obscurity into the hectic turmoil of higher jazzland. Here he discovers that he is a devil of a fellow, a breaker of hearts, a blade of unsuspected and potent charms. Twice in one evening, exalted by champagne and a moon-lit garden, he proposes marriage, once to a mercenary little worldling who had marked him for her own, and once to the suddenly desirable woman of thirty-four who had been his lifelong platonic pal. It is the consequent clash of these rival engagements which gives rise to the thoroughly amusing incidents wherein the bachelor struggles to hold his freedom. Finally, in despair, he renounces and attempts to give away his inheritance in order to escape the claim of his young fiancée. The platonic pal, a lawyer, and a butler intervene to save the eccentric from self-spoliation and to secure his future from pillage by a grasping world. The book is well written, lively, consistently amusing, devoid of the erotic, and to be commended to those readers who "like something light and not too highbrow for a change."

PIMPERNEL AND ROSEMARY. By BARONESS ORCZY. Doran. 1924. $2.

The hero of this tale, Peter Blakeney, is the great-great-grandson of the only original "Scarlet Pimpernel" who will be remembered by many readers of adventure stories. But he has nothing to do except to posture as a hero: the real interest centres in the chief villain of the piece, one Sir Jasper Tarkington who is a very bad man, being, in fact, a Sadist. But he remains a rather lady-like villain, for although he puts through a murder and does some heavy conspiring his chief manifestation of villainy is to "distort" his features to "a wolfish expression of cruelty" and to show a "flash of animal passion in his eyes." Rosemary makes the singular mistake of marrying him, but, then, she was a "lady journalist" who wrote thunderous articles on international politics for the London *Times*, so any eccentricity might be expected of her. The complications of the plot take all hands to Transylvania into a nicely arranged series of intrigues. This is the one seriously conceived element in the book—a picture of the hardships and miseries of the down trodden Hungarian aristocracy under the savage rule of the Roumanians after the war. There seems to be a certain amount of probably accurate observation in much of this, in its account of the confiscations of property, the censorship and the harsh treatment of offenders under the "foreign" rule. For the rest, the story reads like something "dictated but not read"—certainly not proof-read, for Rosemary remarks: "What do you know of love? You are quite right, I did lay (sic) in your arms. . . ."

(*Continued on next page*)

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The New Books

Fiction

(*Continued from preceding page*)

THE RECKLESS LADY. By PHILIP GIBBS. Doran. 1925. $2.

There are certain qualities we have learned to look for in Philip Gibbs's fiction. We know that we shall find clarity, balance, sincerity, clean, sinuous prose pleasing to that inner ear which, while we read, seems part of the eye, and, above all, we expect sanity of vision.

Mr. Gibbs always knows precisely what he is writing about, and he knows it through sharp, unwavering observation. He looks into his subject and all around it. He imparts to his scenes the topography that is theirs, and to his characters their true lines. His situations never are strained, not even on the assumption that truth is stranger than fiction. Hence his stories give the picture of life,—with just something missing.

Those qualities,—clarity, balance, sanity,—go far to commend any book and make it worth reading. Philip Gibbs's fiction is solid. In his latest novel, "The Reckless Lady," his good points are at their best. The story is interesting; that of a woman whose husband has left her because of her indiscretions; the struggle she makes to retain her children, whom her husband, on his return from India, claims; the solution of this problem by husband and wife living together again, both disillusioned in an unhappy middle age; and the story of the children,—young Stephen, a painter, whose philosophy is saddened by his mother's past, and Sylvia, vivacious, keen,—her mother over again,—who marries, after several near escapades, a strong-willed young American. The Flemings, it should have been said, are English. The picture of after-the-war England is sharply done. The flavor of Monte Carlo, where the story has its inception, is brightly colorful. The contrast between England and the United States is well observed. The book, in a word, is something achieved.

What, then, may be the missing something in this, as in nearly all of Mr. Gibbs's fiction. What he knows, it has been suggested, he knows by observation. And at first glance there is no better way for a fictionist to know things. Yet the greatest fiction is, it seems, only partly made by observation,—and mostly made by intuition. Of this faculty Mr. Gibbs appears to have little. What he gains by his trained observation is just that unswerving sanity and balance which rule his work. What he loses by the lack of intuition is those highest flights of imagination which, though they may lead into the uncertain and often transcendental regions, give to the maddest fancies sometimes a sense of more perfect reality than the stodgiest fact. That is why great fiction is at times uneven, why its lines sway, why there may be so much debate as to the psychology of its characters. There can never be such debate over Mr. Gibbs's fiction. It is too clear, too factual.

But that is why none of Mr. Gibbs's fiction approaches the great. The writer's sure excellence has warped him.

THE OLD FLAME. By *A. P. Herbert.* Doubleday, Page, $1.75 net.

THE LION TAMER. By *Carroll E. Robb.* Harpers. $2.

CLOTHES MAKE THE PIRATE. By *Holman Day.* Harpers.

FAITH OF OUR FATHERS. By *Dorothy Walworth Carman.* Harpers.

THE COPY SHOP. By *Edward Hungerford.* Putnam. $2.

DREAMING SPIRES. By *Diana Patrick.* Dutton. $2.

Miscellaneous

SYMBOLISM OF THE THREE DEGREES. By OLIVER DAY STREET. Doran. 1924.

Freemasonry has been defined as "A system of morality veiled in allegory, and illustrated by symbols." The vital underlying idea sought to be inculcated by the several degrees is to give a symbolical representation of human existence, not only here, but in the life to come. The author has undertaken to show the allegorical meaning for all the symbols used for the Entered Apprentice, the Fellow Craft, and the Master Mason degrees. Though somewhat crudely written, it represents, nevertheless, a considerable amount of careful research. For the most part, the quotations and statements are supported by exact reference to well-known authorities. Though of but little interest to the general reader, the book should prove of considerable interest to Masons. Though as originally written, it was little more than a pamphlet, the present volume represents a complete revision and an enlargement of more than a third.

Poetry

SONNETS FROM THE PARONOMASIAN AND OTHER LANGUAGES COMMENCING WITH P. By MAX EWING. New York: Alverson Press. 1925.

"A delightful piece of nonsense" is the first impression to register when one skims through this sequence of twenty-six sonnets. A more leisurely persusal, however, reveals two things: first, that Mr. Ewing, who is first and foremost a musician, has combined words to the achievement of an often rare musical effect, and second, that nonsensical as the sonnets may sound at first, they all have a meaning, artfully buried in a paronomasian maze. (No pun.)

The twenty-six sonnets are dedicated to twenty-six persons, Carl Van Vechten, Geraldine Farrar, Mary Garden, Igor Strawinsky, Marguerite d'Alvarez, Elinor Wylie, and others. They must be read to be appreciated. For example, there is the one for Carl Van Vechten:

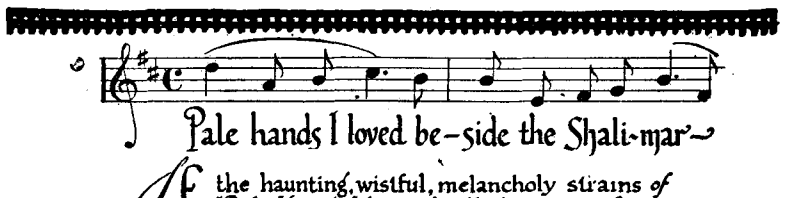
He sat, Scheherezade by his side,
A furry caryatid bearing high,
Like megapodes against a tired sky,
The standards of the feathers that have died.
And, mixing awith unmeasured ginger beer
Mad memories of rapids, cedar fanned,
He conjured forth with pale and polished hand,
A paragon of impious atmosphere:

A tattooed countess, tinged in nicotine,
Held close by ink-stained pages, lithe and thin,
Between the covers of her folding bed,—
A phoenix on the middle western scene.
The alchemist sensed her rare penchant *for sin;*
"She'll go straightway to the borzoi dogs," he said.

The best in the lot to this reviewer, however, is "Kick in Carnegie Hall"—Sonnet from the Palpitation, for Igor Strawinsky:

The pagan clam's claw scrapes the clumsy hunks
Of gas that clogged my stabbed, ecstatic ears,
And roars when its conductor, gnashing, rears
His axe to hack the thunder out in chunks.
A lank peacock scoots gawky up the gangplank,
And biffs the lovely lilies in their sleep;
I hear my blood take off its clothes and leap
Rectangularly—ripping rag and hank.
Stark storms of combination plod beneath
The clouds that whirl on hurdy-gurdy heels,
To quench the bony lightning where it strikes.
The granite-girded claskings grit their teeth,
And scratch the sky's eyes out with scorching steels;
My sense collapses on a bunk of spikes.

(*Continued on page 606*)



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The Reader's Guide

Conducted by MAY LAMBERTON BECKER

Inquiries in regard to the selection of books and questions of like nature should be addressed to MRS. BECKER, c/o *The Saturday Review.*

A BALANCED RATION FOR WEEK-END READING.

THE OLD FLAME. By *A. P. Herbert.* (Doubleday, Page).

FIGHTING THE WORLD. By *Michael Károlyi.* A. & C. Boni).

A TREE IN BLOSSOM. By *Hildergarde Flanner.* (San Francisco: Gilber, Lilienthal.)

M. R. R., Yuba City, Cal., asks—and so have others—if the play "The First Year" by Frank Craven, is published in book form. It is now, at least in pamphlet form by Samuel French of this city.

G. C. C., New York, asks for material for study of the history of the short story.

BY all means get "The Short Story's Mutations," by Frances Newman (Huebsch). This is not a book for suburban groups of serious thinkers and I tremble to think what would happen if some study circles for self-improvement should try to arrange a program from it, but for real students with a robust sense of humor it is a prize. *Contributions to the collection of L. E. S., Conn., on "the kiss in literature" continue to arrive*: E. F. M., Chambersburg, Pa., advises "Le Baiser," a charming one-act fairy-tale by Theodore de Banville (Schoenhof); W. D. J., Utica, N. Y., types a long list of quotations; E. X. F., West New York, sends an original poem; R. C. B., Moorestown, N. J., quotes the whimsical speculations of Hiddigeigei in "Der Trompeter von Säkkingen," beginning "Warum küssen sich die Menschen?", and R. G., New York, says that there is a poetic anthology, "The Kiss in English Poetry," by W. G. Hartog, published about nine months ago by A. M. Philpot, Ltd., 69 Great Russell St., London W. C., and not, so far as he knows, available in an American edition.

SO many have fished that murex up that I can acknowledge only some of those whose letters were especially pleasant: E. H. S., Philadelphia; E. P. D., University of Chicago; A. S. W., Summit, N. J.; L. D. W., Providence, R. I., and D. C. T., Waterbury, Conn., who wrote out of fellow-feelings for one haunted with a line he could not identify; E. M. D., Kelowna, British Columbia, who wrote because it was "a pleasure to make this gesture of intimacy"; G. W. T., Brookline, Mass., a physician who makes the somewhat disturbing comment that it "would be interesting from a psychiatric viewpoint, to plumb the springs of such an obsession"; Z. C., Cambridge, Mass.; M. L. S., New York; R. S. K., Louisville, Ky.; F. L. P., Faribault, Minn.; E. D., Farmville, Va.; D. B. L., from the original inquirer's home town; J. C. E., La Crosse, Wis., "who tempers the blow with "it is so seldom that I have the opportunity to find a lacuna in your knowledge that I point to this achievement with no little pride," and A. R. B., who caps the climax by hinting that my bewilderment before the murex may not have been genuine, and if it were it must have been because Juno as well as Jove sometimes nods. The letter closes "But perhaps you knew all the time. . . ." We are not only advertised but upheld by our loving friends. The "companions of a mile," who pulled me out of a similar lapse some years since, may now organize a murex chapter.

I had passed over the letter of H. H. J., Barre, Vermont, which tells the Kenwood correspondent to refer to Chesterton's "Robert Browning," Chapter VI, Browning as a Literary Artist, "where this very stanza, well toward the end of the chapter, serves as text for one of the most brilliant paragraphs G. K. C., even, ever wrote. If the line then leads C. R. to William Lyon Phelps's 'Browning: How to Know Him' (Bobbs-Merrill), great will be his reward, for that's the best book Phelps has given us, which means it is one of the best anybody's given us, and will lead infallibly to a re-reading of the best of Browning with new enthusiasm." The letter goes on to this noble sentiment: "Except my wife, you (the R. G.) are to me the *dearest* woman in the world. Heaven knows how many of my actuarially-earned dollars have gone for books on your recommendations these many years!"

R. E. L., Colorado Springs, asks where to find material on the art of conversation; saying "there appears to be a dearth of it in material as well as in practice."

CONVERSATION? I ought to know all about that: I have a daughter living on Ebury Street. "Talking Well," by W. L. Harrington and M. G. Fulton (Macmillan) is the latest effort to improve us in this direction. It is all too easy to be funny at the expense of books like this, with their specimen conversations and the mental images called up by what may be done with assigned subjects like "Do you believe that girls behave worse now than ten years ago?" But in actual practice this book would be really useful, from the opening exercises in getting a class to discuss from the floor to the advice on "colloquial English" near the close. After accuracy in diction it calls for audacity, saying that the average person is as timid in the use of his own language as in a foreign one, stifling the impulse to originality. "Table Talk in the Home" is a pamphlet issued by the Abingdon Press in its "American Home Series." Grenville Kleiser's "Talks on Talking" (Funk & Wagnalls) has been widely read; it includes general conversation and public speaking. "Talking Business," by J. M. Clapp, is the first volume of the comprehensive and efficient work, "Language for Men of Affairs," published by the Ronald Press; the second volume is "Business Writing." Come to think of it, there is a chapter called "Savoir Faire" in "A Reader's Guide Book" that enshrines the letter of the young lady who wanted to be able to talk with the ease and grace that, she had heard, distinguished the conversation of the demi-monde. There is Boswell's report of Dr. Johnson's conversation, though talk would languish now should anyone try some of his methods too faithfully; there are the conversations of De Quincey, and Luther's "Table Talk"—the Pilgrim Press publishes "Conversations with Luther," from recently published sources of the Table Talk, by Preserved Smith and H. P. Gallinger. And George Moore's "Conversations in Ebury Street" (Boni & Liveright) is an excellent approach to a liking of Moore.

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Fanny Butcher in *Chicago Tribune*

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Stuart P. Sherman in *Books*

. . . "She manages, by virtue of the wholeness and confidence of her gift, to see the world without a veil, with directness, as if it were the first time it had been looked upon."

Jean De Bosschere in *The Yale Review*

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Points of View

From a Bookseller

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:

SIR:

There are quite a number of angles to be considered in the business of printing and distributing books. That there has not been an adequate return to the bookseller for the money invested, his time and his trouble, is generally acknowledged; at least, among the booksellers, themselves.

A number of years ago, when I needed more money in my business, I went to the bank I had been dealing with for some years, and asked for a larger loan than they had been accustomed to give me. The vice-president of the bank, whom I had known for some time, called me by my first name and said: "They tell me that the bookselling business is not a very profitable one. How about it?" I acknowledged that the profits were small, but felt that with more capital I could make a larger turnover and show a considerable profit. He asked for my statement, showing our discounts from the publishers, turnover, gross and net margins of profit. He simply took a glance at this statement and handed it back to me and said: "That is a business on which this bank would not feel authorized in making loans; all we can loan you is what your personal endorsement, or some other person's endorsement, is worth!" Like the young man in the Bible, I went away "exceedingly sorrowful," as I was in somewhat of a tight place. A man who was interested in the business had concluded that there was not enough profit in it for him, and wanted to get his money out of it. I borrowed every cent I possibly could on my life insurance, managed to get a few thousand dollars through another bank, and wiggled out of my difficulties; made two or three lucky buys, and continued in the business.

One of the principal troubles with the book business is that there is not sufficient margin of profit to cover overhead expense, damaged and poor stock, etc. The average small bookseller's discount, or the largest bookseller's discount on small orders, is from 33 1/3 per cent to 33 1/3 and 5 per cent. On quantity orders the discount is somewhat more. The cost of doing retail business at the present time is 33 1/3 per cent. These figures, alone, are sufficient to condemn the business in the eyes of bank and financial people. The matter of discounts should be revised, so that there is a reasonable net margin of profit above the overhead costs. I am inclined to think that the quantity discount should be modified or abolished, as there is a temptation to over-buy in order to obtain this discount. In any case, where the bookseller has bought the quantity, and continued to order in smaller quantities of from ten to twenty-five copies, he should have the benefit of the original discount. It seems like paying a penalty on the part of the bookseller for selling more of the particular title after he has once risked considerable and worked hard to sell the first quantity. Many booksellers buy the quantity in order to get the quantity price; then, when they feel safe on a particular title stop trying to sell it and buy a quantity of another title. If the bookseller enjoyed the same discount on re-orders he would keep on pushing the older titles.

Then, too, there is the question that has been so much discussed, concerning the quality and over-production of books. There are, surely, too many books of no particular literary or instructive value published. This is especially true of fiction. We read through a great number of books and select a few titles. Even these titles have a life of but about six months, or a year at the most. And there are many books of this class that have a life of only from one to three months.

The great number of magazines probably has something to do with the failure to sell more books. I am librarian of our club, and find that there are very few of the members who read books. They all read the magazines and daily papers.

There is another reason that undoubtedly curtails somewhat the selling of books, and that is the housing of books. People live in smaller apartments and it is not the fashion to accumulate libraries as it was thirty-five or forty years ago. I used to have customers who thought they should buy nearly every book of value that came out, such as biography, history, essays, etc., an dadd to their collections. Their sons now ride in expensive cars and they have not, probably, invested $500 in books.

Another factor which I believe mitigates against the collection and owning of books is the books, themselves. The average modern book is not as well printed, well bound, or as pleasing to handle as the same class of books were a number of years ago. If you will refer to recent biographies and histories, most of them are printed with wide margins on thick bulky paper and the price is high. I have just examined a biography of two volumes containing about 365 pages, each, which is more than half paper, the cost of which is $10. Several biographies and histories of about 350 pages cost from $3.50 to $5. These books are surely not well printed or pleasing to handle. The covers are no longer stamped in gold; they take up a great deal of room on the shelves and are heavy and bulky. If we are to foster a love for books, a desire for collecting and possessing books, they should be made beautiful and attractive.

So much for the business and the merchandise, of books! A word about the bookseller, himself! Some time ago, in conversing with one of the larger publishers, he made the statement that "Booksellers were rather a slow, unprogressive lot." I replied that it might be true, but where there was a general, universal "effect" there must be a "cause," and I thought it would pay the publisher to find out just where the trouble lay.

With plenty of keen men in other business, and making money, why should there not be enterprising, intelligent booksellers? As a matter of fact, there are a great many people who have considered the book business as a life work. Quite a number of college graduates and trained librarians have asked me what the prospects were in the book business, and I have been obliged to answer that if they had some capital and were content to work for small returns, with the right location they probably could get a living; but that I did not see, under present conditions, that there could be much money in the retailing business.

If there were more profit; if some arrangement could be made for the return of unsalable stock, or a part of it, whereby the bookseller would not be responsible for the book he bought of the publishers' representative, with only very slight personal knowledge of what he was buying, there would be more profit in the business and, with more profit, more people would engage in selling books. There should be a bookstore in every town and city of the United States of five thousand inhabitants, or over. That is, a store that carried a fair stock of books with perhaps stationery, office supplies, and the other items that usually go to make up a book store.

The bookseller should know more about the merchandise which he sells, instead of offering the "most popular book" or the book for which the publisher, by his advertising, has created a demand. He should have more first hand knowledge of the books he buys and sells. He should know something more about his own immediate public. There are always, in every community, people who buy books. Many of them are buying them away from their own home town. I know of men and women in my own city who are buying the greater part of their books from New York or Boston because they claim that they can more easily find what they want there than in their own town. On the other hand, I have customers from New York and Boston, and many of the larger cities. Service and catering to the wants of book buyers and everlastingly keeping on the job will secure the business.

H. R. HUNTTING.

Reviewing Reviewed

BY a regrettable accident the concluding paragraphs of a letter by Mr. Seymour Van Santvoord, printed in the *Saturday Review of Literature* of February 28, under the caption, "Reviewing Reviewed," were omitted. Mr. Van Santvoord had begun his letter by calling attention to "the careless and superficial exercise of censorial authority which reviewers are so prone to display," and had followed that statement with an illustration drawn from an article, entitled "American Sagas," recently published in this *Review*. He next proceeded to group book reviews into three categories, the first containing those reviews "which embody conclusions that the subject under review is absolutely wanting in merits of any sort"; the second, "made up of those occasional instances . . . when the fortunate writer has fully measured up to the understanding and lofty ideals of the reviewer, . . ." and the third, comprising "those literary ventures in which the lack of style, the false ideals, the ignorance of human nature, the general aimlessless, and myriad other faults of the author are pointed out with the assurance and certainty of a master—finally qualified by an admission, or at least implication—that to certain ones not so gifted as the reviewer the book may have a passing interest if not actually appreciable value."

The paragraphs which developed from this and which were omitted follow:

In the vocabulary of every competent review of literary productions under present-day standards, there are three essential words: "But," "However" and "Notwithstanding." Thus day in and day out we read:

"*But* in spite of these glaring faults and the author's ignorance of the barest rudiments in the art of story-telling, it is conceivable that a certain class of readers will take very kindly to Mr. Smith's first attempt, which indeed might have disclosed much less actual merit without absolutely discouraging him from further effort."

"*However* the story has some good points, and at least we must accredit the author with the courage of his innocence."

"*Notwithstanding* all this—which ought to make the author much more cautious in his next attempt, it must be admitted that there are many things in this book which are bound to commend it to the thoughtful consideration of the general reading public. The author is at his best in describing the flimsy costumes of the Kaffir women, their manner of cooking food, meal hours and general domestic affairs."

In the use of such a saving clause the review under especial consideration—which falls within the third class noted, although at times dangerously approaching class one—does not disappoint our final expectations. After filling four solid columns of the *Saturday Review* in demonstrating Zane Grey's "stiffness in style," "imperfect mastery of English," "lack of appeal to those whose taste has been formed on those of Howells and Bennett," "crude and rough-hewn portrayal," "lack of psychological analysis," "curious ignorance of human nature and sex views," "amazing and incredible simplicity and unsophistication of mind" *et id omne genus*—in the fifty-ninth minute of the eleventh hour, our reviewer observes in the good old fashion:

"But whether we happen to care for his work or not, I think we must grant him a certain merit in his own way." (Of course, not in the line of what is generally conceded to be literary merit in the abstract).

I wonder whether this conclusion was from deliberate conviction or was subconsciously formed because, as the writer concedes, albeit doubtfully and grudgingly, Grey enjoys "an astounding popularity." But however this may be, our author must find great comfort in this final admission that he has a bit of merit "in his own way"—not, of course, in the line of what is generally conceded to be merit.

Side by side with the critique of Zane Grey's novels in the *Review* appears a discriminating article entitled "Education for Authors." To borrow one of its forcible phrases, "In these days of cock-sureness of opinions . . . when many well-known writers do not know their own trade," one cannot escape conviction that the recognized need of education (using the term in its broadest sense) for authors, is scarcely less manifest than in the case of the reviewers, who so airly crown with immortality, consign to oblivion—or damn with faint praise, those who have made it possible for the writers to display their learning and scholarship and their superior knowledge of the hidden springs of high-grade literature.

"But" I am not writing from an unfriendly standpoint. It is true that the average person presumably will be impressed by the reviewer's apparent purpose to demonstrate that Grey is not entitled to that astounding popularity: "however," I can understand how many readers will find interest in it. And "notwithstanding" the reviewer's argument and conclusion seem not to be in accord with his nomination of Mr. Grey as American *tusitala* (I wonder how many readers of the review know what that word means!), "I think we must grant him a certain merit in his own way."

SEYMOUR VAN SANTVOORD.

Troy, N. Y.

The New Books

Poetry

(*Continued from page* 604)

Who has ever described Strawinsky's music so well as that?

Mr. Ewing is no more obscure than Browning, and he has this virtue: whereas Browning couldn't help it, Max consciously achieves obscurity, with his tongue in his cheek the while. But with all his artful obscurity, he is often remarkably close to the unparalleled music of Swinburne.

On his title page, Mr. Ewing quotes Francis Picabia:

> Je voudrais avoir un nouvel ami
> pour dire des choses incomprehensibles.

The author of these sonnets "too mad to read" should make not a few new friends.

SONGS AND SONNETS OF PIERRE DE RONSARD. Translated into English Verse by CURTIS HIDDEN PAGE. Houghton Mifflin. 1924. $2.

Professor Page's translation of a selection from Ronsard's minor poems has for long been a pleasant memory to English enthusiasts for the great French lyricist. but a desideratum unfortunately difficult to acquire. The book was originally issued in a limited edition, designed by Mr. Bruce Rogers, at least twenty years ago; and the only considerable translation of Ronsard's poems in English has thus remained in the obscurity of private and public collections. It is now reissued in a popular edition, in commemoration of the presumable fourth centenary of Ronsard's birth.

Professor Page's selections from Ronsard's voluminous poetical remains are neither extensive nor representative; but they have the advantage of being excellently translated. None of the longer poems are attempted, the present anthology being devoted wholly to the best-known of the love sonnets, short odes, and madrigals which, pedantry aside, are the most pleasing part of our inheritance from the chief French poet of the Renaissance. The selections number seventy-four, and the book is prefaced with a long and sympathetic essay on Ronsard by the translator, who has further exercised noteworthy intelligence in his choice among the large number of varying texts which exist for every poem.

War

THE EMPIRE AT WAR. Edited by SIR CHARLES LUCAS. Vol. III. Oxford University Press. 1924. $7.

In an attempt to perpetuate the story of imperial coöperation toward the winning of the World War, the editor of this and the preceding and succeeding volumes of this work allocated his writing geographically. He told in the first volume the narratives of colonial participation in previous wars, in the second the tales of the aid rendered by the American possessions and Dominions. In this volume we have the vivid and unforgettable record of the work of the Anzac fighters. Africa caves in the next, and so on. Of course, it might be possible to impeach this method of writing history, or at least this method of arranging history. But the fact of the matter is that the volume now in hand gives brief, striking, and well-considered accounts of the operations of the Australians and the New Zealanders on Gallipoli, in Palestine, and in France: heroic to be sure. Also finely told; and in addition told fully and accurately, more fully than most accounts, more accurately because more studied, and more readably than the official records and reports would seem to the average person who cracks the pages of a book. The only difficulty is a difficulty in classification: geographical rather than chronological. For the rest the book is a fine and worthy tribute to imperial participation in the common cause of the empire.

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The World of Rare Books

By Frederick M. Hopkins

SALE OF BARCLAY LIBRARY

THE library of the late Robert S. Barclay, of Rowayton, Conn., including library sets of American and English authors, extra-illustrated works, illuminated manuscripts, early printed books, and autograph letters and manuscripts, with additions, was sold at the American Art Galleries, February 24 and 25, 677 lots bringing the handsome total of $62,673. All three sessions were well attended, bidding was lively, and good prices were realized. The highest price, $2,000, was paid for Orme's "British Field Sports," illustrated with twenty magnificent colored engravings by Howitt, oblong folio, morocco, published in London in 1807. Gabriel Wells paid $1,000 for the original manuscript of Bret Harte's "Crusade of the Excelsior," 174 pp, 4o, bound in French levant morocco.

Other important lots and the prices which they brought were the following:

Ainsworth (W. H.). "Historical Romances," 20 vols., 8vo, three-quarters levant, Philadelphia, n.d. Japan paper edition. $200.

Beaumont and Fletcher. "Comedies and Tragedies," folio, morocco, London, 1647. First collected edition. $250.

Blake (William). Original pencil drawing, signed, about 13 by 3 inches, framed. Fine study in composition. $310.

British Poets. Extra-illustrated set of the Aldine edition, 78 vols., 12mo, morocco, New York, 1892. $635.

Author's autograph edition. $340.

Conrad (Joseph). "Collected Works," 19 vols., 8vo, morocco, Garden City, 1920-23. Sun-Dial edition. $310.

Cooper (James Fenimore). "Complete Works,"33 vols., 8vo, morocco, New York, 1900. Author's autograph edition. $425.

Racinet (A.). "Le Costume Historique," 500 full-page plates, 6 vols., folio, half morocco, Paris, 1888. Large paper copy. $200.

Dickens (Charles). "A Tale of Cities," 8 parts in 7, 8vo, in case, London, 1859. First issue of first edition. $395.

Dickens. "Works," 30 vols. extended to 60, royal 8vo, inlaid levant morocco, London, 1881-82. Extra-illustrated copy of Chapman & Hall's large paper edition. $700.

Autograph Letters. A unique collection of surpassing interest by Dickens, Thackeray, Charlotte Brontë, and others, 21 pieces in all, bound in a folio volume by Reviere. $1,025.

Dumas (Alexander). "Romances," 43 vols., 8vo, three-quarters morocco, Boston, 1893-95. Edition de luxe. $225.

Autographs. Fine collection of autograph letters and documents signed by the Emperors of Germany from Frederick IV, 1490, to Wilhelm II, 1894. $375.

Field (Eugene). "Writings in Prose and Verse," 12 vols., boards, parchment, New York, 1896-1901. Japan paper edition. $490.

France (Anatole). "Works," 30 vols., 8vo, three-quarters levant, New York, 1904.

Hardy (Thomas). Collected set of first editions, 36 vols., half levant, London, 1872-90. $400.

Harte (Bret). Original manuscript signed by "Cressy," 149 pp., 4to, bound in levant morocco. $910.

Harte. "Writings," 19 vols., 8vo, half morocco, Boston, 1896-1903. Author's autograph edition. $390.

Ingersoll (R. G.). "Complete Works," 13 vols., 8vo, levant, New York, 1900-11. Dresden edition. $410.

Tolstoy (Count Leo). "Complete Works," 28 vols., 8vo, calf, Boston, 1904-12. Grand de Luxe edition. $330.

Irving (Washington). "Life of Washington," 5 vols. extended to 10, imperial 8vo, levant, New York, 1889. Limited Centennial edition extra-illustrated. $625.

SALE OF VIRGINIA LIBRARY

A VIRGINIA historical library formed by an old Virginia collector, comprising rare Revolutionary War broadsides, Lincolniana, Washingtoniana, historical autographs, and general American historical works, was sold February 23 and 24 at the Anderson Galleries. The collection comprised 554 lots and brought $6,818.35.

A few of the rarer lots and the prices realized were the following:

Adair (James). "History of the American Indians," map, 4to, calf by Adams, London, 1775. Uncut copy of original edition. $37.50.

Broadside. Proclamation of Fasting, Humiliation and Prayer prompted by Burgoyne's threatened invasion, folio, Boston, 1777. $45.

Broadside. Proclamation for suppressing Rebellion and Sedition, folio, Boston, 1775. Original Boston issue of the first royal proclamation printed in America after the opening of hostilities. $50.

Broadside. Proclamation for a day of Thanksgiving and Prayer for Burgoyne's surrender, Boston, 1777. $35.

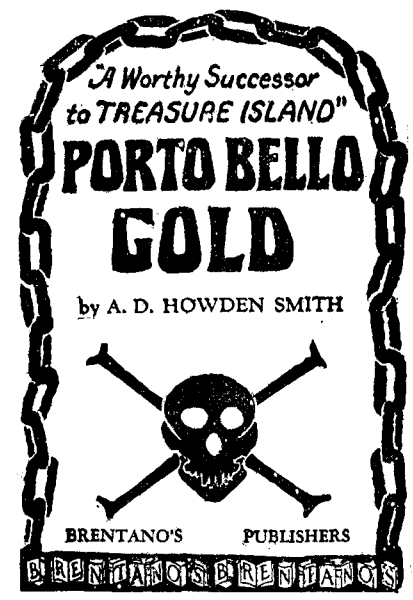
Beverley (Robert). "History of Virginia," small 8vo, half morocco, London, 1705. First edition. $57.50.

Burk (John). "History of Virginia," 4 vols., 8vo, morocco, Petersburg, 1816. Complete set of first edition. $70.

Davies (Samuel). "Virginia's Danger and Remedy," small 8vo, morocco, by Stikeman, Williamsburg, 1756. Sermon printed on the defeat of Braddock. $65.

De Bry (Theodore). "Grand Voyages," 9 parts in 2 vols., folio, vellum, Francofurti ad Moenum, 1590-1602. With Edward N. Crane's bookplate. $230.

Jones (Hugh). "The Present State of Virginia," 8vo, calf, London, 1724. Choice copy of this rare work. $250.



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FAMILY, TOWN, COUNTY AND STATE HISTORIES. Catalogs on request. The Cadmus Book Shop, 318 West 34th St., New York.

EDITORIAL PROOFREADER for Dictionary. State experience in detail and pay expected. The John C. Winston Co., 1919 Arch Street, Philadelphia.

HUDSON'S Green Mansions; Purple Land; Crystal Age; each $1.60. Gotham Book Mart, 51 West 47th Street. (Bryant 5812.)

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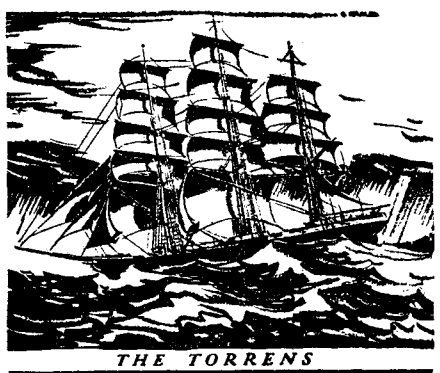


THE TORRENS

He called Conrad "....an incorrigible, hopeless Don Quixote."

What business was there at sea for a boy from landlocked Poland? Where would his ambition lead him, a rover amongst aliens?

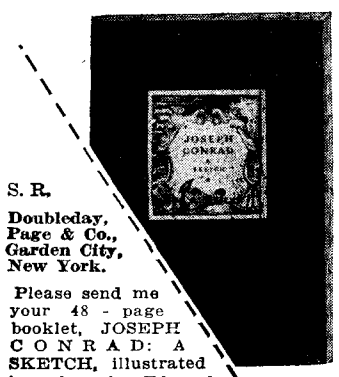
Joseph Conrad, a youth of fifteen, burning with the desire to be an English sailor, could not answer his tutor's questions.

Just then an Englishman came swinging along the Alpine road, and, as he passed the spot where they were resting he glanced at Conrad with a friendly smile. The interruption gave heart to Conrad's arguments, and suddenly, inexplicably, the tutor gave in, saying: "You are an incorrigible, hopeless Don Quixote!" It was the turning point, and a few months later Conrad sailed from Marseilles.

Later in life Joseph Conrad became recognized as one of the greatest of the English romantic novelists . . . yet many who have known him have said that his life was more romantic than any of his writings.

The best, most direct story of Conrad's life has been compiled by his publishers in a little booklet, JOSEPH CONRAD: A SKETCH. This handsome little volume, which is illustrated in colour by Edward A. Wilson, the illustrator of *Iron Men & Wooden Ships,* also contains a very complete bibliography of Conrad's works for collectors and a reading guide to his books, for beginners.

There are a few remaining copies of the first edition of JOSEPH CONRAD: A SKETCH available, and the publishers are giving them away upon receipt of requests containing ten cents (to pay mailing charges). Fill out this coupon and send for yours to-day.



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The Phoenix Nest

TALKING recently of this and that and the other we became involved in an argument as to whether it was better to have a conscience or a good digestion. We ourselves believe firmly that it is far better to have a good digestion. (*Inner Health and Happiness!*)

Having been slightly off our feed for several days lately we began to realize in what large part our far-famed "sunny" nature is due to an intestinal tract that has often seemed to us of cast-iron and vulcanized rubber. When it displayed weakness our amiability went with a pop. Regarding ourselves in the glass we recognized the long, grim, sallow visage of the utterly disgusted Puritan. We shuffled around planning tortures for all our intimate friends. (*But Science has solved our Problem!*)

Literary people are, as a class, not particularly notable for strong digestions. Even our younger realists probably suffer dyspeptic pangs. At least we hope so, for we are not yet, at this writing, quite recovered from ours. Of course it is old stuff to aver that a weak digestion can radically influence a man's philosophy. But, taking this for granted, and seeking to extract some hope from our situation, we began to see a glimmer in the possibility that we might yet develop into the Great Pessimist for whom, we once agreed with another American poet, the United States was soddenly waiting. (*Broken-out Minds Cured by Sulphur!*)

At the time we had that thought American literature seemed in our nostrils rather like the aroma of a cigarette which has already burned some of the varnish off the edge of a desk. You know how it is. You take a puff—! (*That Delicious Smoked Herring Flavor!*)

But then, just as we were formulating the most devastating of creeds, we began to feel better. Our physiology revived and strengthened. Life assumed a less yellow tinge. We looked out and noted that the weather was sunny and what is commonly known as "bracing." We felt that we could leave our office no longer to totter mildewedly along soiled and sordid byways, but, on the other hand, rosily to ramble down mellowly sunlit streets. The loathsome faces of our friends seemed a trifle less insulting. The atmosphere increased in ozone. (*Golden Vacation-Time!*)

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At that moment a special messenger thrust into our hands an advance copy of our favorite magazine (*Over Twenty-five Billion Circulation!*) with the compliments of said magazine's promotion department. We fingered it idly, glanced down a page, and our eye hit this free verse by an eminent English novelist and critic:

I do not want money.
I do not want fame.
I do not want a life of gaiety.
I do not want possessions, in the sense of jewels, automobiles, villas on the Riviera and town houses, slaves, or gold and silver plate.
I do not want innumerable acquaintances.
I do not want contentment.
I do not want "For he's a jolly good fellow" to be sung when I rise to my feet.

Frank's wrong about some things! Even in the first flush of our new well-being he gave us a shock or two.

We do want money. We have bills.
Fame is money.
A life of gaiety hits us where we live.
No—not jewels. How would we wear 'em?
No—we can't drive a car and our friends can.
No—no villas. Just a great big house full of servants. Town and country.
No—we must draw the line at slaves.
Our gold and silver in coin, please,—no plate.
Few acquaintances, but all beverageable.
Would rather not rise, anyway.

But after tabulating these frank emendations or emendations to Frank, we discovered that we had now lost out on the chance of becoming the Great Pessimist. In fact—it's terrible. Everything in America, including our digestion, conspires against really significant pessimism. It isn't that things aren't bad enough. But every magazine you pick up and all the ads around you in the street and on the train are constantly punching at you with, "The Bath Soap that renews your Vitality!", "America's Summerland is calling You!", "Ten-minute Shampoo!", "Diamonds!", "Trim ankles can be Yours!", "Zip!" "Glazo," "Eno," "Softly, a Gainsborough Puff," "Gray Hair Gone," "Nerves—Nix!", "Wrinkles just Waft!", "Keepyeraircomed," "Deaf? A Post-card!", "Verisimple—Banish Pimple," "Housebuilt—costs Nothing!", "Hush, flush, Vericlene," "Blush? Mush! Glisterine," "Dandie Floors," "Perfect Power," "Handy Doors," "Like a Flower—," and so on, and so on, with gathering impetus and powerful impact. Have you a problem, except how to pay for all these things? They banish it! And in America the breath of our nostrils seems to be to live on trust. From morning till even we are reassured and reassured about every possible minor worry. By the ads, by the ads! There is an answer to everything. Affluence is just around the corner, and every kind of concomitant comfort. All this of course is also *What You Must Have,* no shirking that conclusion and trying to be different! It is not only your duty but it becomes precious near a public command that you keep your clothes pressed, your teeth brushed, your hair oiled, your ticket a commuter's, your house a "home," your life a perfect panorama of accessories, beginning with your car and your radio. All of course in a spirit of the utmost cheerfulness, all leading up to the great suburban ideal, all rosily tinted with the flush of complete health and amazing animal vigor to be released upon the invention of new toothpastes, radiolas, nose-rebuilders, uninflammable carpets, unbreakable furniture, unstainable table-linen, unchippable building brick, and seventeen different kinds of unpuncturable tires! (*Four out of Five! Four out of Five!*)

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But the literary gent, *without* a wooden leg and now quite recovered from his transient dyspepsia, sits aghast at his own new energy which cannot be turned to these uses. *Cannot—I had almost said!* Think of it! Oh the blasphemy! Why, all one needs is a sudden glowing faith in some new kind of ink eraser or cuticle freshener, in some new sunbeam in your home luxury that people know not yet that they need! Your fortune is made, weary *littératur!* You were in the wrong pew, that's all! *Wake up! Get hep!* Can you write *copy?* No? Our Special Correspondence Course in Sixty Easy Lessons! *A Dollar down and a Dollar——.*

And so now we have got indigestion again!

W. R. B.

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The author's nice ear for wit and repartee and his singular "flair" for relating anecdotes mark him as the greatest raconteur now writing.

Sarah Bernhardt, Swinburne, Dr. Jowett, Oscar Wilde, Emerson, Lord Charles Beresford, quick-witted Margot Bellanger, young Bismarck, Georges Sand, Prince Demidoff and Chauncey Depew are only a few figures in high life who are "given away" in these pages.

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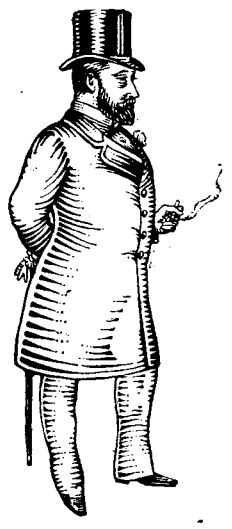

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